# The development of moral, social and citizenship education in the context of the ethos and the curriculum of Greek primary schools: five case studies.

**Eirini Pasoula**

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the development of moral, social and citizenship education in five Greek primary schools, principally by using a qualitative case study approach.

Immersion in the context of five different primary schools provided insights into what might support or constrain the personal development of students. To address the scope within which moral, social and citizenship education develops, both the taught curriculum and the ethos of the schools were investigated. To limit the focus, the curriculum was examined with reference only to the subjects of 'Social and Citizenship Education' and 'Religious Education' in the last two or three years of primary school. The school ethos, which is thought to impact seriously on students' personal development, and yet constitutes an elusive concept, was approached by examining some of its fundamental determinants, such as teacher-pupil relationships, as well as the ways in which these interrelated.

This study contributes to the understanding of school ethos by demonstrating that the ethos of a school should be considered as developing at the levels of the classroom, the whole school and the school's social context; these levels are interdependent and are continuously shaped by each other, as they shape the ethos itself. The study also illuminates how some features of ethos, such as the degree of academic emphasis, can influence students' moral and social development, and demonstrates that the taught curriculum of moral, social and citizenship education and the ethos are not separable but interrelated entities. The study, which reaches these considerations through investigating the ethos and the curriculum of five primary schools, suggests that these considerations should be used in the study of school realities, because it is through such study that the development of values, attitudes and behaviours in schools can be observed in real contexts. Studying school realities may not offer direct solutions or models for students' moral and social development, but contributes to the understanding of what may relate positively or negatively to this development.

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# CHAPTER ONE
# INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by explaining its origin and development. It outlines the research aims and questions, considers the relevance of the study to contemporary discussion and research on education, and also presents the structure of the thesis.

## THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

My thinking about this study started to develop during my MA fieldwork, which I conducted with a primary concern to investigate the place of timetabled moral and social education at a number of Athens primary schools. To limit my focus, I concentrated on the subjects of Religious Education and Social and Citizenship Education at grade 6 only, seeking to investigate their teaching and status through examining the ideas of students and teachers. Working only with questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, I lacked first-hand information about the two subjects and the realities surrounding them. I emerged from that field experience with a wish to investigate the same topic in more detail and depth, and in a greater number of schools too. My MA study convinced me that observation, whether participant or not, would provide a more appropriate and rigorous basis for studying the development of moral and social education through the teaching of the two subjects. Employing observation methods meant staying in the field for longer; this allowed the consideration of other issues that related closely to students' moral and social development, such as the relationships formed between teachers and pupils, or among pupils themselves. Influenced by personal experience, and relevant reading, as well as discussions with colleagues, participants in the MA fieldwork and my supervisors, I came to think that these issues could impact on students' moral and social development more than the taught curriculum. The emergence and exploration of such issues would greatly broaden the focus and complexity of my research, but this expansion would make the study of the topic more valid. Thus, what was needed was not an extension of my MA survey, or an incorporation of observation of classes only – as I had first thought - but a more detailed, qualitative investigation of a smaller number of schools and their daily realities; thus, a mostly qualitative case study approach was finally preferred. Another factor in this decision was that this methodological approach meant more personal involvement in the research, which could turn out to be a richer and more fulfilling experience than eliciting and analysing computerised data. For reasons explained in chapter two, I decided to call the part of the non-

taught curriculum that mainly concerns values, personal relationships and behaviours "school ethos".

During the course of the study, terms, concepts, and methodological decisions were reconsidered. For example, I initially thought of using the term "school practice" when referring to moral, social and citizenship education, but during my reading and fieldwork, I came to prefer the term "development" of moral, social and citizenship education, because the latter often occurs in subtle, unintended and unexpected ways, rather than as the corollary of explicit, deliberate practices. A concept that is fundamental to the topic under study, and that I substantially reconsidered, is the "school ethos"; as explained in the two final chapters, I found that this could be redefined with reference to its development at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's broader social context. My research design has been flexible too; to incorporate further contextual characteristics of schools and to draw, on this basis, comparisons that could feed into theory development, I also conducted a fifth case study at a rural school.

The present study concerns primary schools partly because it is the work of a primary school teacher, whose training and experience could arm her in the research. What was also considered, as indicated by relevant literature (e.g. A. Hargreaves, 1999; D. Hargreaves, 1982), was that primary school settings are permeated by greater emotional richness and higher valuing of teacher-pupil relationships than secondary school settings, which are generally more academically oriented. In this respect, primary schools can accommodate more expectations for fostering students' personal development; this also means that rich relevant data can be yielded.

In the light of the above points, the research aims and questions have been considered and shaped as presented in the following section.

## RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The study seeks to explore, in the case of five Greek primary schools, the development of moral, social and citizenship education in relation to their ethos and curriculum. Though the study often considers indications from related previous research, it does not aim to test hypotheses. Instead, it is mostly exploratory in nature, seeking to *understand* different ways and circumstances in which moral, social and citizenship education may be promoted or hindered, in these five schools. Both curriculum and ethos are investigated, because, as previously said, they both impact on students' personal development.

First, I shall attempt to clarify the broader context of the study, and examine how fundamental Greek educational documentation conceptualises, and provides for, moral, social and citizenship education; an analysis of the relevant documents is offered.

After delineating the context of the study, the role of the taught *curriculum* in moral, social and citizenship education will be investigated. In order to narrow the research focus, two subjects will be examined; for reasons explained in chapters two and three, the selected subjects are Religious Education (RE) and Social and Citizenship Education (SCE). Seeking to further define the focus, analysis of the respective documents will occur for grade 6 only, focusing on the prescribed curricula, and to a lesser extent, on the teachers' and students' textbooks; when examining these, attention will be directed to the aims, contents, values, and pedagogical approaches. Moving from texts to practice, the study seeks to investigate, through unstructured observation and interviews, how the two subjects are taught and what their impact on students' personal development may be. An issue that will be particularly investigated, as indicated by relevant literature (e.g. Apple, 1979, 1996), is the status of these subjects.

Moving from the taught curriculum to the *ethos* of the five schools that are examined, a first area to be explored concerns the extra-curricular activities of these schools and how they may contribute to their ethos and to the personal development of their students. In an attempt to deepen the examination of the school ethos, statements of the schools on aims and values as well as other relevant school documents will be examined, while attention will concentrate on school realities, particularly on features of the school ethos such as the relationships between teachers and pupils, as well as among pupils themselves, the modes of discipline and control, and the teaching methods. It is hoped that further features of ethos that relate to students' moral, social and citizenship education will be identified, and that light will be shed on implicit messages, underlying values and assumptions. Through looking into the school ethos, and its often-unexamined characteristics, insights are pursued into the ways in which moral, social and citizenship education can be promoted, or hindered. Looking across different schools, I seek to detect both similarities and differences in their ethos and in the ways in which moral, social and citizenship education develops. Further attention will be paid to differences related to contextual differences among the five selected schools, which are distinguished from each other on the basis of social class, rural versus urban location, and state versus private ownership; the potential relationship of these contextual features to moral, social and citizenship education will be explored. Finally, it is hoped that, through these attempts, the research can help to illuminate further the concept of school ethos, whose impact on moral, social and citizenship education may be largely acknowledged, but is generally thought of as nebulous and vague (Donnelly, 2000; D. Hargreaves, 1995).

Given the fact that moral, social and citizenship education, inside and outside Greece, has involved religious and political dimensions, the present study will also examine the presence and the role of religion and politics in the taught curriculum and the school ethos.

A final set of research questions encompasses both the taught curriculum and the school ethos, investigating what kinds of relationship can develop between them. I seek to detect cases of consistency or inconsistency, harmony or tension, between them, and to consider what the origins and implications of such cases may be. It can be also asked which of the two seems to be more influential on moral, social and citizenship education, and for what reasons. In the literature, it is sometimes claimed that, as regards values in education, the school ethos can outweigh the taught curriculum (see, for example, Taylor, 1996); I would suggest that this may not always be the case, and leaving the issue open to research may be the wisest thing to do.

I should note that though some value judgements may be detected in the present study, given that complete objectivity is not feasible when human behaviour is observed, described and analysed, objectivity will be striven for during the data collection and analysis. Moreover, the study does not seek to evaluate the quality or the effectiveness of moral, social and citizenship education in the five selected schools. As initially mentioned, the fundamental aim of the study is to *understand* how moral, social and citizenship education occurs through the ethos and the curriculum of these schools, and what implications can be drawn from these cases. Though the study is located in Greece, which differs from other countries in historical, socio-political and educational terms, it is hoped that some of the considerations, implications and suggestions that will be articulated can be of relevance to other contexts; moral, social and citizenship education has some universal parameters (such as the teacher-pupil relationships), and Greek education may be situationally unique, but not completely different from other education systems (for example, there is a national curriculum both in Greece and in other countries).

## RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Dewey (1938) wondered about the benefit of becoming knowledgeable and developing cognitively if in the process the individual loses his appreciation of worthwhile things and the values to which these things are related. His concern points to the importance of the moral and social aspects of education, which is also indicated by the concept of education itself, which assumes that teaching and learning bring about personal improvement (Peters, 1965, 1966), which does not have cognitive dimensions only. The concept of "curriculum" has relevant implications too; if the curriculum is considered as a selection from the culture, this selection should be adequate and cover all relevant systems of the culture, including the moral and the socio-political ones (Lawton, 1996). Beyond these considerations, which seem valid in education systems for different contexts, there are more reasons, nowadays, that feed interest in the area of moral, social and citizenship education.

This area is now seen as important across countries, whereas in the mid-twentieth century the notion of value-free culture and education was very popular, and technological development was thought to be based on rational, objective and value-free criteria (Halstead & McLaughlin, 1999; Lee, 2001). The current interest in moral, social and political aspects of education relates to social and global issues such as environmental problems, the aggressive pursuit of wealth, juvenile delinquency, and also the fear of national disintegration due to globalisation. Education is often blamed for social and moral upheavals, and is burdened with the task of moral and social regeneration (A. Hargreaves, 1994). Smith and Standish (1997) noted that probably every generation tends to look with dismay at the younger generation and to lament a decline in moral standards; though this may be true, the fact remains that there is an array of problems from which education is not expected to be detached. The role of education in students' moral and social development is enhanced by the fact that in modern societies education is increasingly involved in supplementing the family's socialisation of the young (Lawton, 1996; D. and E. Tattum, 1992). In this respect, if the moral and socio-political aspects of culture are not offered by education, they may be offered (in a systematic way) to only a limited extent anywhere else. At the same time, the moral, social and political aspects of education are frequently overshadowed by others that are thought to be economically useful, such as the mathematical and technological ones (Apple, 1979, 1996). It has been indicated, though, that emphasis on vocational skills does not necessarily mean enhanced work productivity, which has often been related - even by those with market-based motives - to a broad liberal education that makes the person flexible, imaginative and critical (Guthrie & Pierce, 1990; Pring, 1995; Psacharopoulos, 1987). Moreover, when education is disengaged from the current moral and socio-political issues of real life, it is commonly associated with alienation and boredom among students (Apple, 1996). Overall, these points can demonstrate the contribution of moral, social and citizenship education, also indicating that studying its development at schools is not unimportant. It should also be remembered that schools are not value-free; their influence, for good or ill, on students' development as persons is inevitable, because they articulate – explicitly or implicitly, wittingly or unwittingly – messages with moral and social connotations. As Kleinig (1982b) put it, since some form of moral teaching and learning goes on, it is important to understand what it is about and to deliberate on how it may be improved.

As discussed in chapter two, much of the literature in the field of moral, social and citizenship education underlines the considerable impact of the school ethos (and its synonyms) on students' moral and social development, but how this influence occurs needs to be illuminated by extensive research, especially if one considers the noted vagueness of the concept of school ethos and its synonyms, as well as its implicit, elusive and complex nature.

Further, the existent empirical research on school ethos, or culture and their synonyms is most frequently linked to school effectiveness, school improvement, management and change (see Prosser, 1999), and not so much to moral, social and citizenship education. Moreover, reviews of relevant research (e.g. Anderson, 1982; A. Hargreaves et al., 1988; Prosser, 1999) have found it to be, until recently, mostly quantitative, seeking to apply or develop measures of values, attitudes and school processes (see, for example, Host, 1998; Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter et al., 1979). As discussed in chapter two, the problem with such approaches is that they cannot accommodate the breadth and depth of values, attitudes, messages and behaviours that may mark the school ethos and students' moral and social development, while the preordinate design may fail to incorporate evolving, unexpected issues. In this respect, a more ethnographic approach is required, as has been increasingly admitted in recent years (Strivens, 1985; Prosser, 1999). The present study pursues, through a mostly qualitative case study investigation of five primary schools, in-depth information about their ethos and its impact on moral, social and citizenship education. The study also seeks to investigate what kinds of relationship can develop - with regard to moral, social and citizenship education - between the school ethos and the curriculum; this constitutes another issue that is little examined by the relevant literature. Another limitation is that the literature refers extensively to the school ethos and little to classroom ethos; however, teachers within a school can differ largely with regard to the ethos they establish in their classrooms, and this is something that this study seeks to look at.

The interest of this study may mostly lie in that it seeks to illuminate the *realities* of different schools; by shedding light on them, it may detect and examine conditions, facts and incidents that relate to children's development as moral, social and political beings. A particular contribution of such an investigation is that it can pinpoint educators' efforts to promote their students' development as persons; such efforts often remain unknown because, as Apple and Beane (1999) explain, the hard-working teachers behind them hardly have time to write and read about them. Yet, "sharing [these] stories is critical, as is teaching one another what can be done, what pitfalls to avoid, and what reality is like when the hard work of building more responsive schools finally pays off" (ibid.: 105). Research in the field may valuably promote such a sharing, on the condition that no idealised representation of stories occurs.

The next section presents how the thesis is organised.

## STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter one introduces the study and presents its aims and questions, also discussing its relevance to contemporary discussions and research on education. Chapter two critically reviews literature on the conceptualisation and the development of moral, social and citizenship

education, and particularly discusses the role of school ethos and the curriculum in such education. The literature review helps to identify, clarify and specify the research aims and questions, as well as to reflect, and make more specific decisions, on research methodology. Chapter three outlines the context of the study, presenting the Greek education system (particularly the primary level), and analysing the conceptualisation of moral, social citizenship education in fundamental educational documents and in the case of two subjects at grade 6. A review of relevant research in the field is also presented, and gaps are identified. Chapter four presents the research methodology that is employed, discussing the research decisions and procedures and the principles that were followed. Chapters five, six, seven, eight and nine present the findings of the case studies that I conducted in five Greek primary schools. Chapter ten analyses the main findings across the cases, detecting critical issues for moral, social and citizenship education and its development through the ethos and the curriculum. Similarities and differences across the cases are detected and analysed, while the concepts of school ethos and curriculum, as well as their interrelationship, are further explored and reconsidered. Chapter eleven draws on the above findings, articulating suggestions not only about the contributions of the study, but also for further insight, research and practice in the field.

# CHAPTER TWO
# IDENTIFYING THE FIELD OF MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Chapter one outlined the study's aims and the questions which it seeks to answer, and explained how it relates to current discussions on education; reference to the development of relevant theory was only limited. Chapter two aims to critically review the relevant literature, so that the research aims and questions can be better understood and justified, while the research design also can be considered. This chapter attempts to conceptualise moral, social and citizenship education; it discusses the issue of moral relativism, and particularly emphasises the role of religious and citizenship education. It goes on to consider the development of moral, social and citizenship education as part of the taught curriculum and the school ethos, and finally discusses the case for evaluating it.

## TOWARDS DEFINITIONS

This section examines how moral, social and citizenship education can be defined; the discussion starts with moral education, explaining why this can be better understood and realised when related to social and citizenship education. A question that lies at the heart of moral education and its potential, was articulated long ago:

> "Can you tell me Socrates, whether virtue is *acquired* by teaching or by practice; or if neither by teaching nor practice, then whether it comes to man *by nature*, or in what other way?" (Plato, *Meno*, a, 1)

Protagoras and other sophists promised to teach virtue for a fixed price; Socrates questioned this, arguing that virtue could not be taught (see Plato, *Protagoras*); paradoxically, Socrates himself has stood out, across the ages, as a moral example and a teacher of virtue. To consider what moral education is, it is illuminating to address some basic concepts, such as *education* and an *educated person*. Education does not merely mark out specific processes or activities; it is mainly associated with learning that is regarded as worthwhile (Peters, 1965, 1966). Some learning is not "educational" – for example, learning how to pick pockets (Lawton & Gordon, 1996). Moral improvement, and value judgements about the learning that embodies it, are implicit in education. In the same vein, the verb "scholatzo", from which "school" stems, means occupying oneself with "the pursuit of insight" (Priestley, 1996: 1). Accordingly, the concept of an educated person implies qualities and accomplishments beyond cognitive development, though an educated person may be socially accepted as such on the basis of academic accomplishments without reference to how that

person relates to social improvement (Pring, 1994) – a reason for this can be the exchange value of these accomplishments within competitive societies. *Paideia*, the Greek word for education, which does not translate easily into English, implies the development of mature, enlightened individuals who have not merely attained specific educational goals. Along with the concepts of *education*, *paideia* and *educated person*, it is relevant to examine what it is to be a *person*, in whom the attributes of a moral, social or political being are realised. Dewey (1916) explained how a person has a variety of callings; for example, no one is just an artist and nothing else; he is, at some period of his life, a member of a family, he relates to some friends, companions and colleagues, and he belongs to some politically organised unit. Similarly, Aristotle had stressed the social nature of Man:

> "no one would choose to have all good things by himself", for man is "*naturally* constituted to live in *company*" (Nichomachean Ethics, ix, 1169b, 17f); "he who is isolated, who is unable to share the benefits of political association, or has no need to share because he is already self-sufficient, is no part of a city, and is either a *beast* or a *god*" (Politics, I, 2, 1253a25) (emphasis added).

Similarly, Durkheim (1925) asserted that man is the more vulnerable to self-destruction the more he is detached from collectivity. These views indicate that to exist and survive as a human being requires meaningful involvement in a range of social relationships. Thus, education for persons should have moral, social and political dimensions; the question of what constitutes moral, social and citizenship education emerges again.

I start with *moral* education, because, the discussion of this leads to social and citizenship education. A review of relevant literature shows that moral education has not received a commonly accepted definition. Crick (1999), while deliberating on the concept of citizenship and education for it, mentioned Popper's (1963) suggestion that one should not quarrel about words; however, though exact definitions should not be pursued (as argumentation can develop further when these are not taken for granted), trying to define concepts can help to clarify and understand them. The number of areas related to moral education that have recently developed under various names – for example, "values" or "character education", and "personal and social education" – is an indicator of the uncertainty in the field (Dufour, 1990; Wilson, 1998). Among these terms, that of "values education" is perhaps the broadest of all, because it goes beyond moral or spiritual codes and includes social, cultural, aesthetic and physical dimensions that shape the development of persons within a society (Lawton et al., 1999).

Vagueness about what moral education is may be surprising since moral education is not new; societies have always been concerned for the moral development of the new generation; in schools, direct moral instruction is given to the students, while the structures and relationships of

the whole school life also transmit to them overt or covert messages of this kind. A reason for the vagueness is that the idea of *morality* is confusing. Morality has been associated with specific virtues and personal qualities, but also as with systems of constraints and norms, or even with stiff correctness of behaviour, sexual repression and timid conformity (May, 1971; Smith & Standish, 1997). The only agreement seems to be that morality and moral education typically represent a set of values that is held to be important and worthwhile – even if we may talk about a "bad program" of moral education (Beck et al., 1971). This much is agreed because a moral world is commonly accepted to be better and happier than an immoral one. To understand morality, a first step could be to resort to a dictionary. A definition of "moral" associates it, amongst others, with "the distinction between right and wrong" or with "accepted rules and standards of behaviour" (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990: 769); "morality" is defined as "right moral conduct" or "the degree of conformity of an idea, practice, etc., to moral principles" (ibid: 770). In these definitions, both the social milieu and the worthiness of being morally good are prominent. It should be noted that the English term "moral" could be understood in two senses, a neutral and a positive one. What seems to form the neutral (or potential) sense of morality, is that we are potentially moral as we are rational: it is an intrinsic part of human nature to possess a sense of right and wrong; May (1971) considered this sense to be analogous to perceiving the external world through the senses. Research has demonstrated that children start to develop a moral sense within the first two years of life (Kagan & Lamb, 1987). The work of Matthews (1994) and Coles (1968, 1992) has also indicated that little children can engage in reasoning where they can make valuable contributions to the discussion of moral and social issues. Owning and developing this moral sense is different from being moral in a more 'positive' sense, for example, behaving in a morally good way.

Importantly, to be moral in both a neutral and a positive sense does not refer only to oneself. It means holding beliefs, making distinctions about what is right and wrong, and relating to both oneself and others. Aristotle noted that moral development requires practice in society:

> "the best man is not the one who exercises his virtue towards himself but the one who exercises it towards another; because this is a difficult task" (Nichomachean Ethics, v, 1130a, 4-8).

In line with this, MacIntyre (1981) argued that virtues – courage, honesty and kindness, to name some of the more obvious – are necessarily enacted through social roles. It should be noted that the word "moral" originates from the Latin "mores", that is the ethical folkways that society demands to be observed (Origins, 1958: 415). Another term used for morality is "ethics", for which the corresponding noun is "ethos", meaning "custom" (ibid: 188), which also refers to social expectations of behaviour. Generally, it is a distinctive feature of all societies that they make moral distinctions and enforce codes relevant to these. Ridley (1997) noted that human beings may be

equipped with predispositions to learn how to cooperate, exchange information, ideas and goods, and divide labour, but conflicts frequently occur and a collaborative spirit does not always survive; these predispositions need to be cultivated, and this is largely assigned to education. Generally, social education relates to moral education, which, as D. and E. Tattum (1992) noted, is often obvious in the school curriculum.

Kleinig (1982b: 253) suggested that moral development occurs within relationships "of an intimate kind". I would argue that there are many chances for morality to develop through not necessarily intimate everyday incidents and various transactions. Kelly (1978: 49) tellingly illustrated this:

> "Morality is concerned with human relationships of all kinds, even those which may appear to be *quite trivial*... It is not necessary to be an Orestes deciding whether you should kill your mother, or a Hamlet deciding whether to slay your uncle, or even a politician or any other adult, deciding what position to take on race-relations; it is only necessary to be *Fred in the Infant School* wondering whether to pull Mary's hair or cut her knickers elastic or pinch her sweets or her bottom" (emphasis added).

Morality concerns daily realities and not necessarily, or mainly, grand decisions. As Murdoch (1970: 66) suggested, moral life is "not something that is switched off in between the occurrence of explicit moral choices"; she contended that "what takes place between such choices is indeed what is crucial". Sometimes, as Smith and Standish (1997) noted, prominence is given to extreme moral issues such as abortion or euthanasia, and morality appears as if being for special occasions. However, daily life abounds in moral judgements and decisions, which may often seem "trivial", but values, beliefs, habits and traits of character lie behind them. Oscar Wilde wrote, *de profundis*, that in life there is no little or great thing, and that every action of the common day makes or unmakes character. Similarly, Dewey (1916) suggested that certain traits of character such as truthfulness or amiability are easily called "moral", but they are intimately connected with thousands of other attitudes that we may not recognise as moral and important; not doing so is, he said, like taking the skeleton for the living body. All these considerations have implications for studies on schools' life, as students daily make moral judgements and decisions, and see others doing so. As has been noted by ethnographic research into the moral life of classrooms and schools, morality is not abstract, timetabled and taught, but constructed and reshaped within experiences of school (see Jackson et al, 1993; McCadden, 1998; Noblit & Dempsey, 1996). These are shaped through the daily interaction of students, teachers, parents and the broader school community, which should be investigated by any relevant research.

A great difficulty, as regards morally good behaviour within social relationships, is how one proceeds from thinking to behaviour. Dewey (1938) said that the most important part of moral education concerns the relationship of knowledge and conduct. Often one is not strong enough to

put into practice one's good intentions, and this seems to counteract Socrates' insistence that logic and morality were very close and that immoral conduct was due to lack of knowledge. The problem of moral weakness has been overlooked, according to Straughan (1999), in discussions of moral education. Any relevant studies have to investigate what happens in daily school reality, beyond what is taught or intended; in this sense, the exploration of the school ethos is important. Another issue as regards morally good behaviour concerns the role of rules and commands. MacIntyre (1981), examining Kantian and Aristotelian philosophy, suggested that Kant took as the prime, moral question "what rules ought we to follow?", whereas Aristotle took it to be "what sort of person am I to become?". In the Aristotelian tradition, virtue is not definable as an abstract, universal principle, but is best understood as locatable within social roles and relationships. It is part of research in moral and social education at schools to examine how the rules and duties that enter into these are related to students' personal development.

The development of morality as inseparable from involvement in social relationships was a widely held assumption in the ancient Athenian city-state; to characterise a good man was to characterise the relationship in which he stood to the others. This understanding of morality provided him with standards by which he could question the quality of public life and enquire whether this or that practice was just; at the same time, his membership in the community provided him with opportunities for the development of such an understanding (MacIntyre, 1981). Citizenship was perceived as membership of a community and participation in public affairs. In this context, Aristotle suggested that the true student of politics was thought "to have studied virtue above all things" (Nichomachean Ethics, i, 1102a, 5). Importantly, the term "politics" originates from the Greek word *polis*, namely "a city, hence a state" (Origins, 1958: 158). Political relationships were the relationships to each other of free men (non-slaves), who both ruled and were ruled (MacIntyre, 1981); it was in this context that a person was considered as a "political" being. Clearly, the term "political" here is free from any negative connotations about party politics, partisan tactics and narrow interests; instead, it concerns the *polis* as the necessary context where the person is to develop as a human being. Poets and politicians thought of *polis* in this way; Sophocles wrote about Philoctetes, who was left on a desert island for ten years, that he felt "friendless, solitary, without a city, a corpse among the living" (ibid: 127). Philoctetes felt exiled not only from the company of mankind, but also from the status of a human being. Friendship, company and membership of a city-state were considered to be fundamental to humanity. Within this value system, Pericles despised the person who did not participate in the public life:

> "we regard the man who takes no part in public affairs not as one who minds his own business, but as good for nothing." (Thucydides, II, xl, 2).

Clearly, political participation - in the broader sense of the term "political" - was thought to be fundamental to moral goodness. A problem with these beliefs is that the Athenian city-state was largely based on slavery; moreover, no women and not all inhabitants who had some personal and property rights were citizens. Though these features appear to contradict the democratic ideals, the Athenian demand for public participation is logical and positive in many ways. As Crick (1999) suggested, few would say that the good life for all consists in the avoidance of public concerns; the whole culture is less rich, less strong and less adaptable to change if people think that they cannot influence authority. Moreover, one cannot work for the social good unless one is moral enough to care for it. Respect for others, a sense of responsibility and obligation towards them, and care when rights are infringed, are political virtues with moral foundations. It is worth remembering Dewey (1916) who considered democracy as more than a political system composed of procedures such as regular elections for governments; he thought of democracy as a moral system, and a way of living with others on the basis of democratic principles such as equality and justice. Overall, it seems that developing as a moral being and developing as a social and political being are strongly interrelated[1]. Given this, moral, social and citizenship education should be conceived and developed in schools as inextricable from each other. Although some aspects of moral education may have little or no reference to politics and citizenship, there are a few socio-political matters that are value-free. "Moral", "social" and "citizenship" education are connected to each other, while the consideration of this connection offers a more complete approach to each. For example, as Wringe (2000) said, when moral education is restricted to individual and personal conduct excluding wider moral and socio-political issues, the scope of students' moral awareness is seriously limited: moral issues of modern social life, such as injustice, are largely political. Each area, however interrelated, can emphasise different aspects - for example, citizenship education, more than social education, may address knowledge of political systems. That is why this study does not refer to "moral" or "social" or "citizenship" education only.

Notably, morality was not always conceived in its full sociological or political sense. Piaget (1932) formed a theory that sought to explain the universal principles of children's moral growth. Kohlberg (1971) claimed that morality represented a set of rational principles of welfare and justice enabling judgements and decisions valid for every culture; influenced by Piaget, he claimed that persons develop their sense of justice through a sequence of six invariant developmental changes. Both Piaget and Kohlberg, and other developmental theorists, were criticised for not recognising the impact of cultural factors on moral development; nonetheless, such approaches to morality and moral education have influenced academic attitudes to moral and social

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[1] This does not necessitate, in any way, citizens' involvement in party politics polemics.

learning (McPhail, 1982). It should be noted that Kohlberg, in his later work, recognised the impact of moral atmosphere on moral reasoning and behaviour. In his "just community" approach to moral education, he considered that schools could offer effective moral education if they were restructured into democratic communities where students would become involved in social situations of moral conflict and would make decisions with other school members; Kohlberg and his associates established an alternative school in Cambridge, Massachusetts (see Wasserman & Garrod, 1983). In both theory and practice, there have been many sociological considerations of morality and moral education. Pring (1984) thought of moral education in relation to the socio-political context, since political questions cannot be avoided in personal and moral development, which concerns the quality of personal life that is profoundly affected by the quality of the life of the society one lives in. He also suggested that moral thinking involves critically viewing the social circumstances and not passively accepting injustices. The interrelationship between moral, social and civic aspects of development and education has been well stated by D. Hargreaves (1994: 37-8):

> "Active citizens are *as political as they are moral*; moral sensibility *derives in part* from political *understanding*; *political apathy* spawns *moral apathy*" (emphasis added).

Clearly, it is not only political participation that rests on being moral enough to care for it and to exercise it in a morally good way; at the same time, moral sensibility develops through political participation, within which deliberation on what is personally and socially good occurs.

Similarly, Heater (1990), elaborating on citizenship, gave an account of how crucial the exercise of citizenship is for moral maturity: e.g. judgement requires thought; participation fights inertia; and thinking of the common good nurtures altruism.

Overall, what seems to result from these considerations, is that a conceptualisation of moral, social and citizenship education should be close to the Athenian assumption that growing and educating others to develop as moral beings is inseparable from growing and educating others to develop as social and political beings. Given this, any definition of, and approach to, moral, social and citizenship education has to address this implicit relationship.

When attempting to conceptualise moral, social and citizenship education, it is helpful to consider the school context. Within daily school life, a school or a teacher can offer messages of a moral, social and political nature during and outside class time, through planned or non-planned activities, by speaking or doing something, wittingly or unwittingly. These messages are received by each student differently, depending on his/her background and sensitivity. Any definition of moral, social and citizenship education, in the context of a research study, should be broad enough to accommodate these perspectives, as well as different views held by the subjects involved. Bearing these points on mind, moral, social and citizenship education in the school context can be

conceptualised as what is offered by school, explicitly or implicitly, as part of the school curriculum and ethos, that relates to pupils' development as morally good citizens, which consists in the development of relevant knowledge, values, attitudes, behaviours and skills. This definition is intelligible and acceptable on two conditions: firstly, that the terms involved are grasped, and, secondly, that the relevant knowledge, values, skills and dispositions are clarified. The next section discusses this clarification within modern pluralistic societies.

## MORAL RELATIVISM

In contemporary contexts, it is often debated whether there can be a consensus on values and on what is right and wrong. This debate is not new; the ancient Sophists had asked questions like "is there such a thing as justice?" (see Plato, *Protagoras*). There are two basic positions. Some say that there is a correct set of values, derived from, for example, the Bible, Marxism, or some set of institutions. Others say that there are no right answers and everything is relative, depending on the circumstances or personal taste. These two positions, in their extremes, represent moral absolutism and relativism respectively (Smith & Standish, 1997; Wilson, 1998). D. Carr (1991) called the idea that moral goals and values are personal and subjective moral subjectivism, and the idea that such goals and values are relative to particular social circumstances and perspectives moral relativism. In relevant readings, relativism appears to represent both ideas. Moral relativism relates to the erosion of traditional institutions, such as family or church, that were sometimes the only sources of moral tuition; meanwhile, post-modern thinking gains ground, relativising and deconstructing virtue and knowledge.

In the context of moral pluralism and relativism, it is questioned whether contents and values can be specified for moral, social and citizenship education, and how these should be selected, interpreted and developed. For example, as Apple and Beane (1999) noted with reference to promoting democracy in schools, the variety of meanings that democracy can take has implications about how democracy can be addressed in schools. Moral relativists may hold that schools have no right to promote one set of values rather than another, and should not deliberately work on the students' moral and social development (Warnock, 1996). For example, MacIntyre (1999) argued that nowadays there are many distinct and competing accounts of virtue, and that there can be no rationally defensible shared form of moral education.

Nonetheless, there are many reasons why moral relativism is not so convincing as it may often look. First, the frequently stated uncertainty about what is right or wrong does not mean that there is total uncertainty; for example, though there are different definitions of the virtue of courage,

we can say what does not count as courage (D. Carr, 1991). Moreover, as Wilson (1998) suggested, the diversity of, and conflict between, moral values does not mean that everything can or should be relativised or denied, or that no answers can be reached to moral problems. Several studies have shown that in pluralistic societies the majority of the population share some beliefs, which constitute a mixture of political, religious and scientific values, for example, that democracy is preferable to totalitarianism, or that virtue is rewarded "in the end" (Cox, 1986; Lawton, 1996). Pring (1984) also suggested that one can list a range of qualities that are likely to be required in any recognisable moral form of life and which are fairly indisputable – for example, not hurting people for the delight of it. Similarly, as Warnock (1996) said, some social values are cross-cultural; for example, in many different cultures it is considered immoral to be cruel to the weak, to pursue individual gain at whatever cost to others, or to abuse those for whom one is responsible. Talbot (1999) focused on the fundamental value of personhood, which concerns the claim that every person, including oneself, is intrinsically valuable and must be treated as such. In many cases values are not highly subject to personal choice or situational conditions, and the rightness or wrongness of things forces itself on us; for example, killing a human being is confidently characterised as wrong (Smith & Standish, 1997). Finally, it should be remembered that morality involves moral disagreement, because it involves valuing, and different people value, interpret and prioritise feelings, needs, and actions differently. It is through argument that we can often discover what we agree and disagree on, and may reach new levels of agreement. What should also be noted here is that the question "whose values to educate children into?" is often articulated in a rhetorical, non-constructive and cynical way, as if seeking to silence any responses (Smith and Standish, 1997; Talbot, 1999). Moreover, not all social contexts - western or not, urban or not - are pluralistic to the same extent. Even if moral relativism seems very convincing, it does not necessarily cause severe problems at school level; parents and politicians commonly expect schools to help children behave themselves. Warnock (1996) suggested that moral relativism is very distant from what she called "classroom virtues"; she explained that, despite any lack of moral consensus on many issues, adults still want children to learn at school to behave well in social situations.

I should add that the capacity of moral relativism to go beyond a 'black and white' approach to moral, religious, social, and political issues, can be very constructive for moral, social and citizenship education, because it can offer to students the chance to face these issues in a more nuanced, flexible, and less strict way. When teachers encourage their students to consider, and to respect, different perspectives, or when they give their own opinion as not the only or the most valid one, students are likely to cultivate openness to different opinions and challenges. It is worth exploring, within research in the area, whether and how teachers make efforts towards this end.

In the context of primary education, where this study is located, it is worth noting D. Carr's (1991) suggestion that, though the discussion of different expressions and interpretations of moral values and practices in different times and circumstances is central to morality, it should not occupy an important place in moral education before children get to know some basics. This makes sense if we agree that children can investigate a moral issue in depth more effectively after they have grasped some values that underlie it. When a case of uncertainty occurs, the school and the classroom teachers can help students face it by fostering openness and deliberation on the uncertainty; pedagogy plays an important role in facing relativism in moral, social and citizenship education. It should be noted that uncertainty does not need to be discussed for the mere sake of it, especially before students have discussed some more basic things. As to attempting to map the territory of the 'basics' that students should grasp before embarking on more relativist approaches, it is true that lists of values and dispositions, attitudes and skills have been generated by studies on moral, social and political education (see, for example, Pring, 1984; QCA/Crick Report, 1998; P. White, 1996). Wilson (1998) noted that basing moral education on a specific content is problematic, because moral education concerns not transmitting certain knowledge and values to students but helping them to think and act in this area. This is one reason why an outline of values and contents is not among the intentions of this study. Another reason is that, as previously discussed, the choice of values, knowledge and behaviours to be developed in each case, is largely influenced by the socio-historical context where education develops. I should note, though, that beyond aspiring to compile any lists of desirable values, attitudes, skills and behaviours, my review of relevant studies has pinpointed that the fundamental values of democratic citizenship, that is, freedom, respect, tolerance, equality, and honesty, are most frequently advocated. I think that this indicates two things; first, that moral relativism has not relativized everything; second, that the moral, social and political aspects of education are interrelated and should be conceived as such.

The above discussion of moral relativism in relation to moral, social and citizenship education draws attention to the fact that that the latter, in different societies and at different times, has frequently meant, often under different names, different things; for example, inculcating students into value codes that preserved existing class divisions, or preparing a less compliant workforce for industrialism and capitalism, or recognising (after two world wars) social injustice, or comparing (within the recent influx of immigrants worldwide) different cultural and value perceptions (Bottery, 2000). Taylor's (1994) review of values education in twenty-six European countries indicates that values education in these countries has related closely to their historical and ideological evolution. This should be taken into account in research in this area, which should

attempt to understand how moral, social and citizenship education develops within the broader context where it is realised.

Educating morally good citizens has often been associated with religious education, while it has also ranged from offering to students factual political information to indoctrinating them into certain political beliefs. To understand more about these variations, separate sections on religious education and citizenship education are presented below.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This section discusses the debated relationship of religious education to moral, social and citizenship education. An issue that lies at the heart of this relationship is how morality relates to religion: firstly, whether morality is dependent on religion, and secondly, whether religion can contribute to moral thinking and behaviour. Though the study is located in the Greek context, I seek to review the relevant literature in the widest possible way.

The debate is not new. Socrates asked whether the Gods loved piety because it was pious, or whether it was pious because they loved it (Plato, *Euthyphro*). The relation of morality to religion was also contested in the Middle Ages, and in the Enlightenment, when Kant argued for the autonomy of morality, and also for the origin of the concept of God in our moral consciousness (Cox, 1983b). Historically, religious education was, in most societies, closely related to moral education, because societies were religious enough to legitimise teaching religion to the young; since religions included both an explicit moral code and a belief in rewards and punishments that served as motives, children were educated to be moral by being educated to be religious (Priestley, 1981, 1987). The moral norms and attitudes that prevail within societies, as well as their arts and social institutions, have been often influenced by religious traditions; moral, social and religious values may be so interwoven that distinctions between them become blurred. Nowadays, the separation of religion and education is often discussed, due to the secularisation of modern societies; secularisation concerns the process by which the social significance of religious institutions, actions and consciousness is diminished, when generally, the ordering of modern society and many people's lifestyle focuses on material considerations, and religion is often considered to be an extra (Beck, 1999; Francis, 1987). However, the relation between religion and morals is complex, and the case for either an absolute divorce, or identification, between them may be very simplistic. Regarding secularisation itself, religion should not be narrowly defined. As Cox (1986) wrote about modern Christians, while statistics of church attendance suggest a decline in belief, active churchgoers can be seen as the tip of a huge religious iceberg, whose submerged part

is the implicit and inarticulate, but often deep and genuine, Christianity of ordinary people, often mixed with other religions and secular philosophies. At this point, spirituality should be considered. The "spiritual" is commonly connected with prayer, meditation, mystical vision and a relationship with the supernatural. Religion, especially in the form of institutions, has often felt threatened by spirituality's lack of doctrinal boundaries; however, religion can be broad enough to accommodate spiritual insight (Bigger, 1999). Spirituality is generally considered to be broader than religious faith. Perhaps, even if one is an atheist, one can be "spiritual" through deliberating on questions about the non-materiality and non-temporality of life. Moreover, spiritual development can occur through enquiries and activities, for example, these of art (see D. Carr, 1996). Possibly, the shift from religious faith to spirituality, as well as the rejection of religious education, can be also explained with reference to the fact that religion itself has been often abused across the ages. Overall, these considerations can indicate that any controversies around religious education should not be seen as absolute but in the light of the circumstances within which they develop.

Hirst (1972, 1981) distinguished education - which he saw as the development of reason - from catechesis, which he saw as the development of faith. He suggested that education and religion are separate and autonomous ways of interpreting human experience (just as religion and science) and thus logically different from each other. He argued that catechesis is compatible with a 'primitive' view of education, where we pass on to children what we believe, so that they in turn come to believe it, but is incompatible with a contemporary 'sophisticated' view of education, where rational objectivity is pursued. Against this it can be argued that religious education does not need to aim at passing on religious beliefs; it can follow, as discussed below, different values, assumptions and pedagogical approaches. Moreover, religion does not have to exclude rational considerations; as explained soon, religion can go beyond them, offering a different, 'cosmic' perspective. Another argument against religious education is that religion offers an authoritarian form of morality that originates from divine commands, whereas autonomy is the essence of morality (Hirst, 1974; J. White, 1993). Obedience to such commands requires religious faith, which depends on personal choice and cannot be taken for granted, especially in contemporary secular contexts. Additionally, it has been cogently argued that people brought up on secular lines are not morally bereft and that morality can exist independently of religious faith (J. White, 1993). I suggest that, though those without religion can be morally good, religious faith can give to persons additional motives to be morally good. Even opponents of religious education have argued that religious faith can provide fascinating moral examples and strong incentives for commitment to moral conduct (see J. White, 1993). Religions are rich in parables about relationships, and address moral and socio-political issues such as wealth and poverty, equality and discrimination. Especially

in the case of Christianity, which is most relevant as being dominant in the Greek context of this study, religious faith is expected to develop within real life: "faith without actions is dead" (James, 2: 17). Kohlberg (1974) went further than suggesting that faith can have moral foundations; he claimed that though moral principles should be formulated and justified on rational grounds, "to ultimately live up to them requires faith" and the "ultimate exemplars" of morality are "men of faith" (ibid: 14).

It should also be noted that both morality and religion concern humanity's perennial search for meaning and truth about oneself, the world and the future (Cox, 1983a). Kohlberg (1974: 11) acknowledged the existence of such questions in young children:

> "If I have found that all children are moral philosophers, Fowler [who explored children's dimensions of faith] certainly has found that all children are theologians who construct their own versions of the ultimate."

Similarly, Kohlberg (ibid.) emphasised - though it is not widely acknowledged (Nidich et al., 1983) - that beyond the stages of moral reasoning, there remains the strongest doubt of all, about why one should be moral, particularly in a world that is largely unjust. He related this doubt to existential questions about the meaning of life and death, which are solved not by reason but by the adoption of a "cosmic" perspective – whether in theistic terms or not – whose essence is "the sense of being a part of a greater whole" (ibid.: 15). This is akin to H. Cox's (1969: 14) description of the religious man as "one who grasps his own life within a larger and cosmic setting [seeing] himself as part of greater whole, a longer story in which he plays a part". This sense can provide support for struggle for moral growth: Coles' (1968, 1992) research into the lives of Negro children who suffered race riots in the American South, indicated that those who triumphed over adversity possessed a vision of a better world as well another morality, with which, and for the sake of which, they could break conventional morality. He found non-psychiatric explanations for persons' survival in the face of serious difficulties. Priestley (1987: 119), drawing on Coles' research, gave two examples:

> "Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi were not just highly moral characters who happened to be religious. They were highly moral characters *exactly because* they saw their own lives *in* the largest cosmic setting. Their self-image was that of being part of *something greater*, a *longer* story in which they were playing a part. It is that which makes sacrifice possible. It is that which was the source of their vision... They became moral leaders because they were *not bound by the mores of convention*" (emphasis added).

In this respect, religious education can have value in that it nurtures children not only in the ethical dimensions of religions but also in their broader visions, which can transform the way one sees the world and the others. S. Weil (1952: 6) claimed:

> "the fact that the human being possesses an eternal destiny imposes only one obligation: respect."

Pring (1984: 123-24) made a relevant point:

> "To believe that one... has been made in the 'image and likeness of God' fills out the meaning of personhood in a way that counts as respect for persons or growth as a person... Related concepts of 'dignity', 'freedom', 'autonomy' take on a changed meaning..."

It appears that religious perspectives can enrich human relationships, and do the same for moral, social and citizenship education. Morality and moral education can exist independently of religion, but religion can go beyond conventional morality and contribute new perspectives to life and relevant aspects of education.

Beyond these contributions, religion should also be considered as something that has largely influenced societies across the ages. Students, whatever religious beliefs they come to hold, should come to acknowledge this. D. Carr (1996) wrote that it is not uncommon for parents of different religious persuasions to want their children to undergo religious education as a process of cultural and moral socialisation, that can help them adapt and live with others harmoniously. Societal, moral and religious values are often interwoven with each other. As Cairns (2001) suggested, we should not deny the religious dimensions of our modern secular cultures; it is necessary to contextualise the values advocated by our societies and education systems. Beyond any general influences on society, religion may have influenced students themselves. Students are members of a society that has some religious traditions, values and practices, which may become evident not only in students' thinking and behaviour, but also in the school curriculum and/or ethos, as relating to students' cultural background. Greer (1983) suggested that since a person's religious beliefs can influence his/her moral thinking and action, moral education should take these beliefs into account; otherwise, it could be out of context. This has implications for research on moral, social and citizenship education, which should explore the religious values that may appear and develop at schools. The consideration of the socio-historical context of research is very important: for example, Taylor's (1994) review of values education in European countries indicated that different countries consider, and relate, religious education to values education differently. In the Greek context of this study, Orthodox Christianity has played a very influential socio-historical role, which can be seen in the fact that religious education appears as both a subject and a broader educational aim (see chapter three), which must influence Greek students' moral thinking, beliefs and experiences. For this reason, I include religious education, as part of both the curriculum and the school ethos, in the scope of this study, and I seek to explore how it develops and what its impact may be.

What should also be examined, when considering how religious dimensions are present in moral, social and citizenship education, are the values and assumptions of educators. For example, religious behaviour may relate not to moral goodness but to duty, which can have dangerous

implications; people have used religious duty as a rationale for killing. Moreover, religious education may cultivate xenophobic and discriminating attitudes among students, and make them unable to respect other people's beliefs. Of relevance to teachers' values are their pedagogical approaches. When they expect students to accept uncritically a religion's moral code, which presumes an authoritarian form of morality, there may be indoctrination and pervasion of education with evangelistic interests, which mar religious education (Cox, 1983a) and education itself. Generally, it depends on how RE is taught; as Priestley (1985: 116) suggested, just as Mathematics can be taught in a way that evokes and excites the spirit, it is "equally possible to teach RE in a manner designed to kill it". In the past, the "confessional" approach to religious education sought to make students religious by initiating them into their society's religious heritage, passing on religious and moral values and developing in them religious belief and commitment. This approach, which required that the teachers were accordingly religious, contributed to the continued coherence of society; however, it became problematic in the context of multi-ethnic, multi-faith secular modern societies, and has often given way to phenomenological approaches that seek to leave out the learners' or teachers' own beliefs and ideas and reject the transmission of religious values and beliefs (Slee, 1989). Such approaches aim to consider the plurality of beliefs, and to understand the importance of religion from the believers' perspective as well as the role of religion as a social and cultural phenomenon. These approaches can also affect the pedagogy of the subject, moving it from any notions of indoctrination or transmission towards more democratic, exploratory approaches. The importance that the pedagogy of religious education has for the subject's relationship to students' moral and social development suggests that, in the present study, the ways of conducting religious education should be investigated.

In the following section, I discuss citizenship education, which D. Hargreaves (1994) recommended, within the current multi-cultural context of Britain, as providing a common core of values that people with different moral, cultural and religious values could share so that they could live together harmoniously. Citizenship education is generally considered to be very relevant to moral and social education (Haydon, 1997, 2000), though often irrelevant to religious education (Totterdell & Walsh, 1999). The latter point can be refuted if one considers, as explained soon, the close relationship of the two areas to moral and social responsibility and sensitivity, as well as to religiously saturated political movements.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

As was explained in the section on definitions, the moral and social development of the person cannot be considered or realised in isolation from his or her socio-political context; growing as a moral being is closely related to growing as a social and political being. Moral and social education cannot avoid political questions, as it involves the quality of personal and social life, which is profoundly affected by the political context. Society also expects teachers to sensitise their students on socio-political issues with moral dimensions such as respect for human rights, though teachers are commonly asked to remain neutral and detached from politics, so as to avoid proselytising students into one set of political beliefs rather than another (Kibble, 1998; Pring, 1999). Educating 'good' citizens is not a new issue; it was a concern of Plato, while Dewey made democratic citizenship a major theme. Across the ages, it has been a role of schools to promote political learning through programmes that have varied over time and between, and within, socio-political systems and institutions (Cogan et al., 1997; Davies, 1994). Lately, teaching and learning about politics have attracted, worldwide, increased attention, so that future citizens can respond appropriately to a range of challenges and serious social problems; generally, there is a sense of crisis that feeds interest in this area (Davies, 2000; Kerr, 2000). It seems, overall, that the introduction of politics in schools cannot be avoided; thus, as Crick (1977c, 2000) suggested, since it cannot be avoided, it had better be faced.

It should be noted that democracy, as well as citizenship and relevant education aspects, takes on different meanings in different contexts and in different countries (Ichillov, 1998; Kerr, 2000). Citizenship itself is said to be an essentially contested concept, with long disputes about its proper use (Beck, 1998). Ichillov's (1998), Torney-Purta's (1999) and Kennedy's (1997) presentations of citizenship education in different countries demonstrate the great variety of political contexts where children grow up, and the diversity of factors and issues that have a bearing upon citizenship education. Several terms have been used to describe relevant institutionalised forms of education: political education, civic education, citizenship education and political literacy. Ichillov (1998) noted that these terms are used interchangeably, and that their choice can be either a matter of fashion or represent different meanings: "political literacy" has sometimes related to more radical traditions that seek to raise the level of participation, while "civic" and "citizenship" education have frequently focused on individuals' relations with the civic/social realm, rather than on their affinity with the political arena. Nonetheless, I would argue that under any label, there can develop different traditions, more or less conservative or radical. A number of typologies have been suggested for presenting different approaches ranging from conservative, content-led approaches to

more critical and radical ones (e.g. Harber, 1991; Kerr, 2000; McLaughlin, 1992; Porter & Stradling, 1982). This thesis employs the term "citizenship education", which appears to be the most frequently used in the literature nowadays, and seeks to embrace under it, and investigate, any political teaching and learning that may develop at school as part of its curriculum and ethos.

What should be noted in the different approaches is how deeper concepts, such as democracy and citizenship, are conceptualised. Starting with *democracy*, it is worth noting W. Carr's (1991) distinction between the 'moral' and the 'market' models of democracy. In the moral model, democracy is mainly seen not as a political system but as a moral way of life characterised by fundamental human values such as equality – this model appears to be akin to Dewey's discussion of democracy. In the market model, democracy is mainly seen in an empirical way: it is associated not with allegiance to moral ideals but with a set of institutions and procedures, e.g. selecting between political elites for the exercise of power, and freedom concerns the pursuit of one's private interests rather than public participation. Citizenship varies accordingly: in 'moral democracy' it means participating positively in collective efforts to improve society, while in 'market democracy' it is associated with a set of arrangements, e.g. legal rights (W. Carr, 1991). The market model appears to deprive democracy of its ethical foundations and to view citizenship in an empirical, technicist way; this implies that citizenship education can be disconnected from moral and social education. *Citizenship* itself has been conceptualised in different ways too. As Ichillov (1998) noted, the classical definition of citizenship may rest on the assertion that it involves a balance between rights and obligations, but there have been different and more specific approaches to this concept, depending on the context. For example, citizenship has evolved from the personal involvement of the citizen in the polis into subordination to the claims of the nation state, frequently in terms of voting for representatives and obeying the laws (Heater, 1990). Marshall (1950) conceptualised citizenship as involving three elements: the civil (which concerns the right to individual freedom), the political (which concerns the right to participate in the exercise of political power), and the social (which is based on the individual's obligation to contribute taxation to a state system of provision that can redistribute resources to citizens who cannot provide for their own needs); Marshall suggested that the welfare state incorporates these three elements. This definition is distinctive for its social element, which Marshall saw as indispensable for generating a sense of community membership and for safeguarding against risk and insecurity (Beck, 1998). Heater (1990) saw citizenship as one of the identities that the person has, distinguishing it for helping "to tame the divisiveness of other identities" (ibid: 184), which stem from differences of gender, race, nationality, religion, and class; he suggested that citizenship, though not covering the other identities, overlays them.

Heater's approach calls attention to the *national* dimensions of citizenship. As previously mentioned, citizenship education varies among national contexts due to historical and socio-political reasons. This means that in the Greek context of this study, the development of citizenship education through the taught curriculum and the school ethos should be examined in relation to the historical, national and social features of the context (which is presented in the next chapter). What should also be examined is how national identity and issues of racial discrimination are treated; national citizenship has been often considered to be obsolete and even dangerous, while, in increasingly multi-cultural areas, tensions can occur between the national and multinational dimensions of identity (Cogan et al., 1997). Bottery (1992) claimed that citizenship should be globally oriented, due to the universality of many challenges and problems. A middle course could be that the values and demands of national citizenship should not be denied but combined with the idea that today no nation operates in isolation from the others. Consideration of issues of discrimination is important here too.

Different conceptualisations of citizenship cannot overrule the fact that democratic citizenship has a basic core, which lies in the Athenian democratic *polis* (city-state). As Crick (2000) explained, "democracy" is simply *demos* (the many), and *cracy*, meaning rule. In the Athenian democracy, a citizen was the person who had the right to participate in socio-political affairs by either speaking in public and voting. Citizenship, beyond its legal and social status, had moral connotations: one was considered to become truly human and develop himself through participating in the life of his *polis* (MacIntyre, 1981). Citizenship education is a permanent need of democracy[2]: a democratic society cannot persist unless its members take on the responsibilities of democratic citizenship in a competent manner – for example, they do not fall prey to demagogues (Mursell, 1955); thus, they should be educated towards this end. P. White (1996, 1999) suggested that democracy relies on values rather than on procedures (such as free elections); as she explained, procedures do not stand alone but rely on values, and are best realised when values are best embodied; moreover, one may have the array of knowledge and skills required for public participation but certainly needs to be disposed to use them democratically. Similarly, Crick (1977b, 1999) suggested that any democratic political education, as distinct from an indoctrinating one, presupposes the development of "procedural values": freedom, toleration, fairness, respect for truth and respect for reasoning. Overall, the essence of the above views seems to be that a democratic policy cannot stand alone, and what matters is people who carry convictions and values. Overall,

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[2] I refer to *democracy* because this is the political system that seems to be most attractive and ethically justifiable (Wolff, 1996); moreover, the Greek context of this study happens to be a traditionally democratic one (OECD, 1997).

both democratic citizenship and education for it have moral foundations, and that is why this thesis addresses the moral, social and political aspects of education together.

Within different approaches to democratic citizenship, political teaching and learning have taken different orientations. They have often focused on informing students of basic political facts and theories, for example, how the government and other institutions work (Cogan et al., 1997; Whitburn, 1986). Though political awareness is fundamental to citizens' effective involvement in public affairs, knowledge is not enough, because democratic citizenship requires the development of values (such as caring for others and respecting them as persons), as well as of skills (such as discussing constructively and engaging in interpersonal problem solving). Porter (1979) suggested that the effectiveness of political education is shown by creating a proclivity for action. Similarly, Wringe (1992: 29) talked about "active citizenship", which also involved voluntary community service, so that values, beliefs and attitudes and behaviours would develop in practice. As regards the sceptical view that politics cannot be learnt from books but from experience, Crick (1977c, 1999) made the valid point that this should not counteract the need for learning adequately about how governments and political parties work, because knowledge is fundamental to participation. He claimed that any students should have the opportunity to discuss and understand politics - for example, the variety of political methods and aims. I would suggest that a balanced approach should aim at the development of knowledge, as well as values, attitudes and skills. As to what content citizenship education should have, this is difficult to define, given the variance of meanings and aims that citizenship can adopt in different contexts. Some recent research in citizenship education worldwide by Torney-Purta and colleagues (1999) demonstrates that students themselves frequently show a disdain for politics, especially at the national level, and are much more interested in environmental movements. This indicates that citizenship education should be broad enough to accommodate broader socio-political issues. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that democratic citizenship, as previously discussed, is founded on some fundamental values such as tolerance and freedom.

Another important issue for teaching and learning in citizenship education is that of *bias*. Political aspects of education have often become synonymous with indoctrination and totalitarianism, as citizenship itself has been related to strong nationalism (W. Carr, 1991; Harber, 1991). The opposite tendency is to depoliticise citizenship education: Frazer (1999) noted that the political aspects of education are often assigned an apolitical air, and are subsumed under a great range of courses, such as personal and social education, health education, voluntary work and collective pursuits. Although moral, social and political aspects of education are interrelated, moral and social aspects should not swallow up or cover the political ones. Feinberg (1983) suggested that

attempts to amalgamate 'politicised' with 'depoliticised' programmes of education cannot succeed, because political questions are too 'strong' to coexist with apolitical perspectives. Crick (1977a, 2000), writing on bias in citizenship education, made the valid point that teaching it factually and objectively, may lead to dullness or hypocrisy, while giving a romantic image of politics can create cynicism or disillusion when students face reality. He pointed out that teachers hold their personal views of political realities, and that what matters is *how* these views are held and presented: whether tolerantly, reasonably, with respect for those of others, and with knowledge of the implications. This points to the pedagogy required; it is important to help students to think for themselves, to develop their argumentative skills and to face different views. These issues should be explored when investigating citizenship education at school, and lead the discussion to the role of the school ethos in citizenship education.

It has been repeatedly noted (e.g. QCA/Crick Report, 1998) that any discussion of citizenship education should make explicit reference to both the curriculum and the school ethos, which can influence considerably the development of students as future citizens. Education for democratic citizenship cannot be treated as simply an additional subject in the curriculum; it necessitates a re-organisation of the experiences that children have at school towards more democratic approaches. It is worth noting the research of John and Osborn (1992) on the effect of the school ethos on students' citizenship attitudes; a comparison between a traditional and a democratic school indicated that the school ethos influenced students' political attitudes, particularly those related to democratic values and the rights and freedoms of the individual.

The role of the school ethos is extensively considered in the next part of this chapter, which discusses the development of moral, social and citizenship education through the school ethos and the taught curriculum.

## THE ETHOS AND THE CURRICULUM

The great span of moral, social and citizenship education, and the difficulty of defining it and mapping its field suggest that its development in schools may be more complicated than that of other curriculum areas. In the following sections, I examine the development of moral, social and citizenship education at school through the two main avenues where it is offered: the ethos and the curriculum of the school.

**The Ethos**

Moral, social and citizenship education involves a number of concepts to be grasped, values to be embraced and attitudes and skills to be acquired so that one develops as a certain kind of person, for example, one who cares for matters other than one's personal well-being. If students are expected to develop in this way, there should be provision in the aims, processes and contents of the planned curriculum. To become a certain kind of person is not solely a matter of learning some facts (as one might learn the details of a historical event) or acquiring a theoretical framework to enable this learning or developing certain skills (e.g. argumentative) (Pring, 1984; J. White, 1982). As Dewey (1916) argued, when learning at school is from books only, knowledge concerns the reproduction of information, and does not have much influence on life. Moral development, especially, cannot be conceived or realised in theoretical terms only; as previously discussed, it is closely related to social relationships that provide a context for moral reflection and action. Consequently, beyond including moral, social and citizenship education in the taught curriculum, it is necessary to consider the context where this curriculum is taught, that is the context of the classroom, the school and the school community (or broader society). These contexts provide messages that influence, explicitly or implicitly, positively or negatively, wittingly or unwittingly, the personal development of students. Importantly, this impact may be greater than that of the taught curriculum (A. Hargreaves et al., 1988; Pring, 1984). Citing the following school incident, Pring (ibid: 94) pinpointed the difference between academic and moral and social learning:

> "One day, my six-year-old daughter in grade two was near to tears because she had been teased...[she had stitches in a gashed eyebrow] The class teacher took considerable trouble to find the boy in another class [the culprit], not to tell him off or to punish him or to force him to apologise, but to explain how his teasing had hurt someone and how this was not the way in which the school could become a friendly and pleasant place... To the teacher this was the normal way of handling this kind of problem – *such social and moral learning was more important than the academic*" (emphasis added).

The importance of 'real life' learning is a commonly and intuitively accepted truth; it is often said that "virtue is caught, not taught". Developmental psychologists also support this idea; Kohlberg, as said previously, indicated as necessary the transformation of school into 'just communities', where students could become involved in real-life moral dilemmas and decisions. For the reason that the school context is so influential, it is essential that its social and moral qualities be examined.

An important question is what exactly constitutes the curriculum context; understanding it would support any efforts towards studying and improving it. Various names have been given, which are, to some extent, vague, intuitively defined, and synonymous with each other: "ethos",

"atmosphere", "climate", "culture", "pattern", "tone", "style" (Anderson, 1982; Prosser, 1999). Under some of these names, it has gained the attention of studies on organisational climate research (e.g., Halpin & Croft, 1963), on school effectiveness (e.g., Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter et al., 1979; Smith & Tomlinson, 1989), on school improvement and change (e.g. Fullan, 1991; Fullan & A. Hargreaves, 1996; Sarason, 1982), on school management, leadership and micropolitics (e.g. Ball, 1987; Schein, 1985), and on school self-evaluation (e.g. MacBeath, 1999). Pallas (1988) noted that the curriculum context has been investigated by such studies because it is considered crucial for the school's educational outcomes, as well as malleable - for example, school management may improve, even if student intake may not. Another term that has often been greatly used is the "hidden (or "implicit") curriculum"; this refers to underlying norms, values and attitudes that are transmitted through the social relations of the school and the classroom, and is seen as mainly stressing conformity to rules, passivity and obedience, while also promoting inequity (Apple, 1979; Giroux, 1983). A. and P. Blumberg (1994) referred to the "unwritten" rather than the "hidden" curriculum, to avoid the implication that anyone has deliberately hidden something. They suggested that there is nothing prethought or preplanned about the curriculum that is not offered through instruction; however, this does not have to be always the case. Generally, the truth behind all these terms seems to be that the taught curriculum is, as Priestley (1996) argued, a concept that cannot include all the discourse and happenings in education, and the value of these terms is that they draw attention to aspects of schooling that may remain unexamined.

It is noticeable that the above studies that investigated school climate, ethos or culture were not studies on moral, social and citizenship education, but on school effectiveness, improvement and change. In research on moral, social and citizenship education and the role of the curriculum context, guidance - in theoretical and methodological terms - can be offered by previous research that investigated social aspects of school life, though not always focusing on moral, social and citizenship education. D. Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970) sought to study the social structures and relations in secondary schooling, and showed that these were largely influenced by the streaming system; high-stream students were found to be more strongly committed to school values than students in bottom streams. Jackson (1968), studying life in elementary school classrooms, argued that schooling is preparation for life in the sense that the hidden curriculum is marked by three key aspects that characterise adult social life: living in a crowd, experiencing praise and reproof in public, and feeling the power of authority structures. Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) examined how working-class children learn to fulfil the expectations of teachers as to whether they are intelligent or not; Willis' research (1977) indicated that working-class children come to adopt working-class expectations and careers. The research of Sharp and Green (1975) in three infant

classrooms attempted to study and demonstrate how well-intentioned child-centred ideas were finally influenced by wider social forces; for example, the school had to account for itself in the established way over literacy and numeracy, and routine activities had to be structured by teachers rather than developed 'within the child'. King's (1978) study - with the figurative title "All things bright and beautiful?" - investigated life in infants' classrooms, particularly the meanings of teachers' actions. Wasserman and Garrod (1983) studied the application of Kohlberg's "just community approach" to the "Cluster School", where students, parents and teachers regularly met and discussed school matters, while the curriculum was also expected to contribute to children's moral and social development. Pollard (1985) studied the daily life of three primary schools, and concluded that the social world of primary schools is created by the interaction of teachers and students within the context of the classroom, school, community and broader society. Closer to the topic of the present study appears to be the research of Jackson and colleagues (1993) in eighteen classrooms of six different schools, whose life they attempted to investigate in detail with an eye to moral significance. McCadden (1998) studied the moral life of a kindergarten classroom, exploring how teachers and children struggle with real-life dilemmas and how morality is constructed. Noblit and Dempsey (1996) examined the activities, interactions, and relationships that go on in the classrooms of an inner-city secondary school, and argued that the moral significance of schooling is found not so much in what messages are offered to students, as in what students do with their schooling experiences, and how the moral is constructed, rather than learnt, in them. Goodman (1992) discussed a project that tried to identify an elementary school with an explicitly democratic ethos, and, when this school was located, further research investigated how its ethos was manifested and interpreted in daily school life. Smith (1993) presented the cases of a number of alternative American high schools, which gave students opportunities for self-government and active participation in the life of their school and community. Apple and Beane (1999) also presented some specially selected schools, which were distinguished for cultivating critical thinking and democratic attitudes in their students. The three last studies, by contrast to the previous ones, concern schools that were special cases. I decided, for the present study, *not* to pursue such cases, so as to reduce the barriers between the research findings and the "average" practitioner or reader.

Before conducting research involving school culture, ethos or climate, it is important, for reducing ambiguities, to attempt to clarify, and to distinguish between, these terms and to choose one of them. The concept of school ethos or climate or culture has been generally contested in educational research (Strivens, 1985; Prosser, 1999). Prosser (ibid.), when reviewing relevant studies, noted that "climate" is used by school effectiveness researchers and "culture" by school improvement researchers; moreover, there is variance across geographical locations – for example,

in the United States and in Scotland "climate" and "ethos" are most common respectively. Prosser (ibid.) also suggested that, across the years, culture has been increasingly used – possibly because it offered, via ethnography, an accepted methodological framework – but there has been little agreement on what it means. Perhaps a definition cannot capture the breadth and depth, or flavour, of these terms; however, at the outset of a research study, pursuing definitions can help identify the field and design the research, even when absolute definitions are not finally reached. The difficulty of defining school culture and synonymous terms lies in that they are essentially holistic (Lawton, 1996). Phrases that explain these terms, such as "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1983: 14) or as something we know "in our bones" (A. Hargreaves et al., 1988: 184), capture part of their essence but do not solve the ambiguity. I should note that when literature on moral, social and citizenship education was reviewed, "school ethos" appeared to be more frequently used, with "culture" coming second.

Though these two terms tend to be used interchangeably in the literature (Munn, 1999), they are not identical. "Culture" has its roots in anthropology and has been used in different senses and in different areas, as well as sometimes misused (Nias, 1989; Prosser, 1999). According to D. Hargreaves (1995), most writers employ the anthropological definition of culture – culture as the knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, morals, rituals, symbols and language of a group; in short, as a "way of life". D. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991: 17) thought of culture "as the procedures, values and expectations that guide people's behaviour within the organisation". This definition and the previous ethnographic one succeed in that they address reality. The problem is that, as Lawton (1996) argued, terms such as "procedures", "values" and "expectations" are treated as if they exist at the same level of commitment; he suggested that it would be useful to distinguish, before pursuing a holistic view of school culture, between its deeper and more superficial levels, that is to start from beliefs, go on to attitudes and values and then proceed to behaviour (including the visible aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment). D. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991) mapped school culture by outlining the choices that each school has to make, for example, on the aims of the school, the curriculum, the types of organisation and management, and, finally, the "ethos", to which they referred as something that "a school possesses or lacks" (ibid: 89). I would question that ethos is something that a school possesses or lacks; each school – like all self-contained organisations – tends to develop its own pattern or climate (Anderson, 1982; Rutter et al., 1979). In Hargreaves' and Hopkins' previous account, "culture" appears to be *broader* than "ethos", including management and the curriculum itself, which I seek, in this study, to view as parallel to the non-taught curriculum. "Ethos" has been distinguished from "culture" elsewhere. D. Hargreaves (1995) suggested that "ethos" is not as rich concept as the anthropological model of "culture".

Torrington and Weightman (1989) claimed that, though culture and ethos are very similar, the ethos of a school mainly concerns values and behaviours, and can be encapsulated in comments such as "we don't do things that way here". Moreover, etymologically, ethos seems to be closer than culture to values, behaviour and moral, social and citizenship education, because the word "ethos" (derived from the Greek) means "character" and relates to "éthika", elliptical for "éthiké tekhné" meaning "moral art" (Origins, 1958: 188). Considering these points, it may be suggested that school ethos is that "dimension" of the school culture that relates to values and behaviours. Thus, within the present study, though I draw on research on school culture and climate when necessary, I use the term "ethos".

A dictionary definition of "ethos" considers it as "the characteristic spirit or attitudes of a committee, people or system..." (Oxford Concise Dictionary, 1990: 402). When attempting to define ethos, it is helpful to examine some features, through which it becomes expressed and develops. The review of relevant literature indicated that such features of the school ethos are the school's formal statements, the human relationships developed at school (e.g. between teachers and students, or among students themselves), the modes of authority, discipline and control, as well as the teaching methods. These features are discussed in the following paragraphs.

At first sight, we might suppose that the ethos of a school can be seen in *formal statements* such as the school aims (Donnelly, 1999a). Sharp and Green (1975) almost equated the school ethos with the statements about a school by its Head; however, these statements may not be fulfilled, or they may be intended as aspirations. Halstead (1996) made the realistic point that there could be considerable differences between the values a school proclaims and the values that characterise its practices. For example, a school's stated values may address a collaborative spirit while individual teachers may foster competitiveness inside classrooms. Even in the absence of such contradictions, different students and teachers can interpret stated values differently. Thus, the value statements of a school offer a first only indicator of its ethos, which should be further investigated. Donnelly (2000) suggested that the school ethos can be described either as an independent phenomenon that prescribes, through aims and objectives, the social reality of a school, or as something more informal emerging from social interaction; the last description seems more realistic.

Examining the *human relationships* that are formed at school can offer insights about its ethos. Perhaps, interpersonal relationships lie at the heart of ethos: Allder (1993: 69) located the concept of ethos "primarily in the realms of social interaction" formed at school. The relationships between teachers and students have received much attention, with frequent reference to the models of behaviour provided by teachers. Previous research (e.g. Bandura, 1969) indicates that children

often tend to copy the behaviour of others, especially those in positions of authority or those whom they like or respect. What the teacher is can be more potent than what the teacher says; Oakshotte (1973: 176) wrote that he owed his recognition of the virtues of patience, accuracy, elegance and style to one of his teachers "not on account of everything he ever said, but because he was a man of patience, accuracy and style". Jackson (1992), who conducted long-term research inside classrooms (also see Jackson, 1968; Jackson et al., 1993), suggested that children imitate their teachers, almost as much as they imitate their parents. An important aspect of teacher-pupil relationships relates to the teaching methods employed in lessons. Torney and colleagues (1975) examined the political socialization effects of classroom climate in nine countries, and found that climates that stimulated discussion were associated with students becoming more supportive of democratic values. Overall, teachers carry their own personalities to their work; these influence the ethos of both their classroom and the school. For this reason, the present study seeks to investigate, apart from the ethos that a school appears to establish, the ethos that different classrooms seem to develop. When examining human relationships at school, it is also important to explore the relationships among students; it has been found that students' behaviour can be influenced by their peers (Rutter et al., 1979), as well as that students can form their own groups with values and norms different from, or opposed to, those dominant at school (D. Hargreaves, 1967, 1982). Examining the relationships among students can offer some insights about students' morale and background, which influence the school ethos. Both teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships can be seriously influenced by the degree of *academic emphasis* prevailing; for example, high academic expectations may promote competitiveness among students.

The school *organisational structures* and modes of *discipline* also impact on ethos and on students' personal and social development. It is generally held that students' participation in school decision-making helps them to practise their listening and communicating skills (such as to understand others' views and problems) and to become used to making moral decisions. Findings of school effectiveness research, as reviewed by A. Hargreaves and colleagues (1988), as well as by Sammons and colleagues (1995), noted that good discipline contributes to creating a positive ethos. It was found that discipline was not best founded on a great number of rules, especially about matters such as wearing school uniform, not chewing and lining up. It was indicated that too frequent, and unfair, use of punishment can create a tense and negative atmosphere with harmful effect on behaviour, especially when formal punishments including detentions or physical punishment are often applied.

As opposed to imposing authoritarian structures, giving students opportunities for *participation* in lessons and in wider aspects of school life, enhances their development as persons,

motivates them and helps school improvement (A. Hargreaves et al., 1988; Pickering, 1997). For many reasons not examined here, students may not be offered many opportunities for active participation in school or community life. However, at least at classroom level, attention can be given, as Kohn (1996) suggested, to building a non-judgmental climate when discussing bad behaviour; and students can deliberate on classroom rules and give their own explanations for their behaviour.

These features of ethos that research has distinguished and discussed as important indicate some themes that should be studied while going in the field, collecting and analysing data. The present study, when exploring the ethos of the schools it includes, seeks to investigate these features and any relevant emerging ones. Since this study concerns moral, social and citizenship education, where questions about religion and politics have been considered to be important, the presence of religion and politics in the school life is examined. Attention is also paid to extra-curricular activities, because participation in them is considered to have potential benefits for students' personal, social and academic development (see NCC, 1990). Beyond these, while reviewing the literature I also pinpointed some points that I have considered when deciding on the research methodology, as well as when conducting the fieldwork and the analysis.

First, school cultures appear to vary between *primary and secondary* schools. Primary school cultures largely rely upon the principles of care and control; there is less academic pressure than in secondary schools, and students come closer to their classroom teachers (Rudduck et al., 1996; A. Hargreaves, 1999). Secondary schools, that usually have a larger size and different teachers for each subject, are distinguished for increased academic orientation, polarization among more and less successful students, and the fragmented individualism that students experience while moving from one subject and teacher to another (A. Hargreaves et al., 1996; D. Hargreaves, 1982). Howe (1987) noted, with reference to the US, that such differences account for the fact that secondary schools develop more failure and behaviour problems than primary schools. I think that these differences may not always be so important, given the fact that primary school students have to prepare to move successfully to secondary education. In my research in five Greek primary schools, I seek to examine whether, or to what extent, individualism and academic pressure can influence their ethos.

A second point is that the culture of a school is influenced by the *social class background* of students. Thrupp's (1999) research suggested that the school mix effect is best understood as the accumulation of the numerous small effects that result from differences in reference group processes, instructional processes, and organisational mechanisms, which all relate to students' background. For example, middle or upper class children come from families with higher

occupational aspirations and corresponding academic expectations, which can affect their morale. Foster-Allen (1996) provided an illustration of how the values of inner-city students can influence their behaviour at school. Pallas' (1988) report of a survey of teachers in 538 American secondary schools, claimed that school climate was significantly related to student body composition, specifically that the presence of economically advantaged and academically successful students could facilitate the development of a positive climate. Given this evidence, I decided that it could be interesting, in this study, to explore the ethos of schools in different socio-economic locations and to examine whether there are differences related to these.

A third point is that each school is said to have a *unique* ethos or culture, or its own reality (Beare et al., 1989; Deal & Kennedy, 1983). This can be also seen, as Stoll (1999) suggested, in the example of two seemingly similar primary schools, located in the same area, drawing students from the same population, and having the same number of students; these two schools are, despite these similarities, different. The uniqueness of each school makes sense if one thinks that each person – teacher or student – is unique and experiences and affects the school differently. Considering these points, the present study recognises the uniqueness of each case of school it explores, and looks for both similarities and differences between them.

Another point is that, though "culture" or "ethos" appear to be holistic terms in that they represent the whole school, there can be considerable differences from classroom to classroom, or from group to group, *within the same school*, while "significant sub-cultures" can develop (Prosser, 1999: xii; also see D. Hargreaves, 1967, 1982). Nias (1989) similarly argued that the culture of a school is not its only, but its dominant one. I would suggest that even if very different sub-cultures do not develop, the classroom teachers of a school may differ much from each other. For example, in one classroom the teacher may help students to think for themselves, whereas in another they are required to agree with the authority represented by the teacher, the textbook or other school structures. Different sub-cultures or different classroom teachers can offer their own approach to values, their own social practices, and construct different realities, which can compete with one another and sometimes create a sense of inconsistency. In light of these possibilities, the present study seeks to investigate different cases of groups of, or individual, teachers or students in each school.

Another point is that several *typologies* for mapping the school culture or ethos have been suggested (see Stoll, 1999). Typologies may develop as part of attempts to capture the elusive nature of a culture or ethos. A first typology derives from the fact that, though school "culture" and "ethos" are holistic concepts, there are different cultures within them in the sense that there is teacher culture, student culture and parent culture. A. Hargreaves (1994), by referring to cultures of

teachers (not schools), gave a four-element typology: individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality and balkanisation. These types depict differences in how teachers work, or do not work, with each other, which can impact on the school ethos and also on moral, social and citizenship education. D. Hargreaves (1995, 1999) mapped the school culture on the basis of two dimensions: the instrumental domain, representing social control and task orientation, and the expressive domain, representing social cohesion through maintaining good relationships. From this basic model, he developed a typology of four school cultures sited in different and extreme places of the two dimensions, ranging from high to low, between which there is a theoretical optimal position. He made the realistic point that different aspects of a school, including teacher or student subcultures or individual classrooms, could be located in different segments. This comment pinpoints the main weakness of typologies, which seem to assign overall characteristics to schools where in fact different subcultures, inconsistencies and tensions develop. This is why this study does not follow any typologies: when a school is defined as having this or that type, the great differences that might develop between individual classrooms and groups within the school are overlooked.

Another point that has been sometimes suggested by previous research is that the ethos, culture or hidden curriculum can *outweigh* the taught curriculum with regard to moral, social and citizenship education, in the sense that former can counteract the latter (see for example Taylor, 1996). This can occur when serious contradictions between teaching and practice develop. Such contradictions were noted by D. Hargreaves (1982) when studying the British secondary school system; he suggested that students might be formally taught to act out of mutual respect, but many of them also experienced at school an intense experience of failure, no respect for their own values, and, as a result, a destruction of their own dignity. Cornbleth (1984) and MacBeath (1986) said that contradictions and resulting tensions could disappoint or confuse students, reduce the credibility of the school as offering rhetoric only, and identify the taught moral principles with airy ideals. More optimistically, I suggest that contradictions can make students more sensitive and critical towards the issues involved. We may enquire how powerfully the ethos and the curriculum can affect each other. D. Hargreaves (1982) reported, when considering the British secondary school system, that most of the literature on the hidden curriculum suggests that with most students the latter has a greater impact than the formal curriculum. I would suggest that the extent to, and the circumstances under which this happens, is something that should be decided in the context of each case; it is also in the scope of research to investigate it.

A final issue to examine is what research methodology has been, or should be, employed. Research on school climate, ethos or culture has inherited methods from the studies that were interested in investigating it (Anderson, 1982; Prosser, 1999). The aim of organisational research to

measure the climate led to employing quantitative instruments such as the "Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire" (see for example, Halpin & Croft, 1963; Hoy & Clover, 1986). School effectiveness research has largely been quantitative, and has followed a quantitative approach to ethos/climate, commonly investigating a great number of schools through questionnaires and structured observation (see for example, Mortimore et al., 1988; Pallas, 1988). The problem with quantitative studies is that, due to the structured, preordinate design they follow, they cannot capture the underlying, and often unpredictable, values and messages that may characterise the school ethos. For example, when employing instruments such as "moral atmosphere" questionnaires (see Host, 1998), or when selecting a number of ethos indicators to investigate (see MacBeath, 1999), some aspects can be left out, especially because, as previously discussed, each school culture is situationally unique. The inadequacy of the predominantly quantitative approaches was underlined by Strivens (1985), in her review of school climate research, where she suggested that ethnographic approaches would be necessary to explore the plural values, conflicts and unintended outcomes in a school, which all contribute to its climate. Finlayson (1987) as well criticised the statistical approaches for addressing some aspects of the climate only and not its holistic entity. In the light of these criticisms, research has mostly followed, since the late 1980s, qualitative approaches (Prosser, 1999). Given these considerations, the present study employs, as further discussed in the methodology chapter, a case study ethnographic approach.

Finally, regarding *Greece*, where the present study is located, the limited amount of empirical research in education should be mentioned (OECD, 1997; Noutsos, 1981), particularly that of an ethnographic kind, as well as the fact that, so far, the only relevant study is one that explored, through a questionnaire, teachers' perceptions of school climate (Kavouri & Ellis, 1998). This limitation is likely to have occurred because in Greece, ideas about "pedagogical neutrality" and "non-politicised education" have been greatly influential (Noutsos, 1982) across the years.

Beyond any research evidence about school characteristics that are associated with positive moral and social outcomes, many people can bring to mind, from their experience as students and/or teachers, cases of hard-working educators who struggle to create and exploit opportunities to foster the moral and social growth of their students. Such teachers can use, for example, a simple question or a seemingly trivial incident - such as that previously mentioned by Pring (1984) - to sensitise their students on the moral and social issues that are woven into their daily lives. As Huddleston (1999) suggested, the classroom itself is a public forum where students with different beliefs and backgrounds can be brought together to deliberate on moral, social and political issues, if the teacher leads in this direction. A published example is that of a teacher called Searle, who taught his disadvantaged students in London to explore the conditions of their lives and to express



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their reasons creatively (see Searle, 1975). Apple and Beane (1999) wrote that these teachers' stories are very little published and read, since hard-working teachers hardly have time to write them. One contribution of relevant research lies in shedding light on such cases.

The serious impact that the school ethos can have on students' moral and social development suggests that its quality should be investigated and improved. Important questions are to what extent working on the quality of the school ethos is enough, and what the contribution of the taught curriculum can be.

**The Curriculum**

There are arguments both against and in favour of including moral, social and citizenship education in the taught curriculum. As regards the first position, it is suggested that timetabling this area can reduce the concern for it: it can become "something that happens on Tuesdays between ten and eleven, and gets forgotten outside that time" (Haste, 1987: 63). Thus, it can offer a good excuse for overlooking the impact of the social characteristics of the school or classroom; in Pring's (1989) view, it can be a way of avoiding the crucial questions about the school ethos, particularly the modes of authority. Nevertheless, I would suggest that overlooking the role of the school ethos is not necessarily a corollary of including moral, social and citizenship education in the taught curriculum. Another serious objection to this inclusion is that it may lead to 'moral assessment': the more we define and classify a topic, the likelier it is that we try to assess the learning of it, a process which may be misused or overused (Haste, 1987). However, this can be avoided; moreover, moral judgements form an indispensable part of schooling; for example, teachers comment evaluatively on their pupils. Another point is that moral, social and citizenship education is often taken to mean teaching the children a specific set of values, which teachers and parents can dismiss, especially in modern pluralistic societies (McPhail, 1982). However, this is not always the case; moreover, as was discussed with reference to moral relativism, there are still some fundamental values to educate children into. As to the argument that timetabling moral and social education loads the already overcrowded curriculum with some additional subject(s) (Pring, 1984), it can be argued that if any subject is worth dealing with, this load is worth it. Overall, though the objections to including moral, social and citizenship education in the curriculum have some basis, they can be refuted, if appropriate steps are taken.

There are also considerable arguments for timetabling moral, social and citizenship education. Lawton (1996), considering the curriculum as a selection from the culture of a society and defining culture as the whole way of life in this society, made the valid point that the curriculum should constitute an *adequate* selection from the culture, addressing all its systems –

including the moral, and socio-political ones, unless it is assured that education into them occurs outside schooling. In modern societies, education is seen as a main avenue to offer to the young generation, in a planned way, what is seen as valuable in the culture; thus, any curriculum that seeks to be socially relevant and balanced should explicitly address the moral and socio-political aspects of the culture. As to realising this, Pring (1984) said that the importance of the school ethos should not overshadow the contribution of the curriculum. He explained that there are concepts to be grasped if one is to deliberate from a moral or political point of view, skills to be learnt (e.g. in interpersonal problem-solving), the relevant attitudes to be acquired as well as habits to be formed. Wilson (1998) similarly argued that morality does not simply float in the air; it involves thinking, evaluating and acting, whose development requires some systematic teaching and learning. Moreover, learning incidentally only can be problematic, because information and values may be expressed unthinkingly, without being exposed to critical reflection on behalf of all parties involved. Overall, the moral, social and political aspects of culture and education seem to be too important and multi-dimensional to be entrusted to non-planned learning only. I should add that, particularly in highly centralised education systems that are restricted to a statutory detailed curriculum – such as the Greek one, where the one-textbook rule also dominates school practice (see chapter three) – if the prescribed curriculum does not address such issues, these may receive, also given the lack of school-based curriculum planning, only trivial attention.

To summarise, the arguments for including moral, social and citizenship education in the curriculum outweigh the opposing ones. Seeing this in conjunction with the importance of the school ethos, addressing moral, social and citizenship education through *both* the taught curriculum and the school ethos seems to be a balanced and appropriate approach. This explains why the present study considers both ethos and the curriculum, also exploring how they co-exist, namely how consistently or inconsistently they work within a school.

At this point, reference should be made to the debate on whether moral and social education in the curriculum should be pursued in *distinct* subject area(s) or through *integrated* approaches (Kleinig, 1982a). Hirst (1974), conceptualising morality as a distinctive form of knowledge, argued that specific periods allocated to moral education are necessary for covering it adequately. As Kleinig (1982a, 1982b) explained, when moral education is taught as an adjunct to other subjects, it may be swallowed up by the latter; literature, for example, can contribute importantly to moral education, yet its potential may not be used. When moral education is not swallowed up by these subjects, their integrity can be violated, because they are seen as vehicles of moral education mainly. I think that both extremes can be avoided by *separate* provision for moral, social and citizenship education, which can help to cover the relevant issues satisfactorily and to

allocate increased responsibilities to certain teachers. Separate provision is not without its difficulties either. If the subjects taught for moral, social and citizenship education are to have any effect, they must have status within the curriculum and become recognised as worthwhile and important by school staff, students and parents. Moral and social education courses usually have a low status (A. Hargreaves et al., 1988). Nowadays, getting ahead and getting an education are inseparable in most people's minds; students, teachers and parents are usually reluctant to take seriously any subject which does not contribute directly to certification (see for example, Labaree, 1997). Apple (1979) elaborated on the stratification of knowledge. He explained that a corporate economy requires the production of high levels of technical knowledge to keep the economic apparatus running effectively and to further its sophistication and efficiency. Mathematics and Science receive more attention than Arts and Humanities, due to the economic utility of maximising the dissemination and production of scientific and technical knowledge. High status knowledge appears to be discrete: it has identifiable content that is teachable and also testable. I would suggest that moral, social and citizenship education is by nature less amenable to these criteria and can have great difficulty in securing high status, especially in schools that emphasise success in examinations. As McPhail (1982: 33) put it, a non-testable subject such as moral and social education can become a "frill". Apple (1996) also asserted that such subjects might also be more associated with factual knowledge and passive consideration of the established social arrangements rather than with critical thinking. As to the low status of such subjects, an alternative could be to have them assessed through formal examinations so as to get them recognised in the eyes of students, parents and teachers; nevertheless, incorporation into the competitive examination-centred system would be self-defeating, as being incompatible with the nature of moral, social and citizenship education. Thus, separate provision, beyond its advantages, might be unsuccessful due to the utilitarianism pervading education. However, this is not enough to obscure the need for providing separate space for moral, social and citizenship education and for direct attention to school ethos. It indicates, though, that in research the status of relevant subjects should be explored.

The advantages of teaching moral, social and citizenship education within distinct curriculum areas do not mean that the *integrated* approach to it is inappropriate or unhelpful. The issues involved - e.g. how to come to terms with the individual self and others - are too broad to be restricted to any particular curriculum slots for moral, social and citizenship education. Appropriate insights can be provided through many curriculum areas; QCA (1998) and Bailey (2000) provide an account of various subjects' distinctive contribution to the area. The integrated approach also excludes the danger of moral, social and citizenship education becoming something that is taught at a certain time only, and of missing other opportunities. Moreover, considering moral and socio-

political issues as they arise in the context of other curriculum areas enables the understanding of their nature, complexities and implications. Last this approach might overcome part of the compartmentalisation, which bedevils modern life, where people may overlook the moral implications of their thoughts and actions, and separate morality from everyday real life (Kleinig, 1982a). However, like the separate approach, the integrated approach is not without its difficulties. It is very difficult to co-ordinate successfully different approaches by different teachers and subjects. What can occur is lack of coherence (A. Hargreaves et al., 1988), although inconsistencies are not necessarily negative and can help students think for themselves. Overall, pursuing moral, social and citizenship education in the curriculum through both an independent subject area and integration with others, has both advantages and disadvantages, which means that a balanced combination of both methods, always depending on the circumstances, is most appropriate.

To summarise this section, there are good reasons for including moral, social and citizenship education in the taught curriculum and not entrusting it to the school ethos only. Thus, this thesis addresses both the ethos and the curriculum of the schools it investigates, by acknowledging the potential of both, and by seeking to explore how they relate to moral, social and citizenship education as well as to each other.

The last section of this chapter enquires to what extent and in which ways moral, social and citizenship education could be investigated.

## EVALUATING MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Kohlberg (1981) suggested not only that there are stages of moral development, but also that where the person lies in relation to them can be scientifically assessed, and then, by using appropriate moral dilemmas, he/she can be helped to progress more quickly and effectively through them. Several measures have been developed for assessing values, moral reasoning (e.g. the 'Moral Judgement Interview' by Kohlberg), empathy, and behaviour, as well as school's moral atmosphere (for a review see Halstead & Taylor, 2000). Certain indicators such as levels of bullying, disruption or theft might be available. A problem is, as discussed in the section on definitions, that there can be a gap between moral reasoning and morally good behaviour. Moreover, the pre-ordinate design of such measures may omit important but unexpected issues, values, behaviours and subjects. Additionally, efforts to assess the moral and social levels of students, teachers or schools can make them present themselves with an artificially improved image. What should also be noticed is that not all schools and teachers have the same problems or challenges to cope with; this variety impacts on how they relate to their students' personal development. What is more, it is difficult to

appreciate, and compare, the conditions of different schools. It is also very difficult, if not impracticable, to assess the impact of moral and social learning in school on students' lives, because many non-school factors interfere in students' personal development. As Havelock and Huberman (1977) noted, it is impossible to attribute changes in personal behaviours and attitudes solely to educational intervention, unless this occurs through prolonged, intense treatment with the near exclusion of other environmental effects, which is not the case for the present research. Overall, evaluating moral, social and citizenship education as it is being offered by the school ethos and the taught curriculum appears to be very complicated. Before speaking of evaluating moral, social and citizenship education, it would be realistic to attempt to understand how it appears to develop and to investigate what its impact may be; this is where the contribution of relevant research lies, and where not conclusions, but only tentative suggestions should be articulated.

On evaluation, a final point that seems to emerge from the research literature (even if not directly stated), as well as from my own and others' experience, is that there is no case for trying to make the school ethos ideal or absolutely democratic. Schools are institutions of people who are not perfect; what should be expected is that schools should become more ethical and democratic, or less unethical and authoritarian.

This point closes the deliberation on moral, social and citizenship education with regard to the curriculum and the school ethos. The next chapter presents the Greek context, where the empirical research of this study was realised.

# CHAPTER THREE
# THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study aims to explore the development of moral, social and citizenship education by considering the ethos and the curriculum in a set of five Greek primary schools. The impact that the curriculum context can have on students' moral and social development suggests that a good understanding of the broader social context is essential; moreover, any piece of empirical research needs to be contextualised. This chapter aims to present the Greek context within which moral, social and citizenship education is explored in this study. The first part outlines the Greek education system, particularly at the primary level. The second part examines the conceptualisation of moral, social and citizenship education in fundamental documents on Greek education. The third part analyses the cases of curricular documents on two subjects that are thought to be closely related to moral, social and citizenship education at grade 6. The fourth and last part considers moral, social and citizenship education as a field of study in Greece.

## GREEK EDUCATION AND THE GREEK PRIMARY SCHOOL CONTEXT

This part offers information about the Greek education system in general and, in more detail, about the primary level.

### Background features and Structure

The cultural and national history of Greece has profoundly modelled, across the ages, Greek society and institutions. Modern Greece traces its past back to ancient Greece and the Byzantine Empire, which was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1453; the Greeks only gained their independence in 1829. Greek education has a long history of more than two thousand years, going back to the ancient Greek city-state, with particular reference to the Athenian democracy, where '*paideia*' aimed to nurture participating citizens. In Byzantium, the Orthodox Church played a leading role in socio-political affairs, while later, during the four centuries of Turkish occupation, the lower clergy contributed greatly to the teaching of Greek to the young, establishing the idea that Hellenism and Orthodoxy are complementary to each other. Significantly, since the establishment of the modern Greek state in 1829, education has been controlled by the Ministry of National Education and Religions[1], while the subject of Religious Education has always been included in the school curriculum (Kallen, 1996; OECD, 1982). In the modern Greek state, education contributed to the consolidation of Greek society by

[1] In this study, the Ministry of Education and Religions is referred to as 'Ministry of Education' or as 'MoE'.

educating the young into the centuries-old values of Greek culture. In 1981, Greece joined the European Community; today, it is still one of the less developed countries of the present European Union, with some financial constraints and social problems, particularly youth unemployment, still not being faced successfully. The education system is considered to be unsatisfactorily geared to the needs of the economy, but Greek parents continue to have great trust in education as advancing the life chances of their children (OECD, 1982, 1997).

Today education is legally based on the Greek Constitution, which prescribes important provisions. Education is stated to be "a fundamental objective" and an "obligation" of the state; it is "free" at state schools at all levels, "all Greeks have the right" to it, and there are nine years of compulsory schooling (Greek Constitution, 1975, Article 16). The state's expenditure on education and its free provision probably explains why Greek education is predominantly public and the size of the private sector is small - in 1992 it covered about five percent of the entire number of schools (Kassotakis & Lambrakis-Paganos, 1994; OECD, 1997). Teachers at state schools at all levels are civil servants, recruited, promoted and paid by the state.

Greek education is structured in three successive levels: primary (grades 1 to 6), secondary (grades 7 to 9, and 10 to 13), and tertiary (university and non-university level).

**Administration and Management**

The system has always been highly centralised. It is headed by the Ministry of Education, the main centre for decision-making and executing educational policy which is expressed by directives issued by the Government in the form of parliamentary laws, executive acts (presidential decrees and ministerial decisions) and circulars, regulating almost all issues of curriculum and assessment, the appointment and promotion of teachers, school operation and expenditure. The Pedagogical Institute, which operates under ministerial approval, prepares, for each subject and grade, the curricula, the students' textbooks and the teachers' guides, whose nationwide, exclusive use is mandatory (OECD, 1996, 1997). There are also school advisors who provide pedagogical support for teachers and ensure that the prescribed curricula and textbooks are followed (Law 1304/1982).

**Curriculum**

The curricula for primary and secondary school subjects are centrally designed and mandated. The law on the structure and operation of primary and secondary education (law 1566/1985) affirms that the curricula are complete guides to educational practice. They chiefly include for each subject and grade: clearly formulated objectives, the content to be taught, and directions for the methods and the means of instruction for every unit or topic. The examination of some curricula documents indicates that they also prescribe the quantity of time allocated to each subject (also see MoE, 1992). Essential supplements to the curricula are the textbooks for

students and teachers, which, as the above law suggests, are written in accordance to the curricula and are distributed free of charge. The state requires that schools, both state and private, should teach from these curricula and textbooks. The textbooks are single for each subject and grade. The one-textbook rule dominates Greek educational practice, even when teachers do not approve of the books: most teachers are civil servants and have to conform to the state; moreover, any extra performance and initiatives are not rewarded, while their low salary does not encourage such extra efforts (OECD, 1996, 1997). Overall, the teaching of a subject is commonly highly influenced by the corresponding students' and teacher's textbook.

Teaching is generally held to have largely maintained a teacher-centred approach (as happened in the past), often involving memorisation of contents (Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides et al., 1994; OECD, 1997); however, the validity of this general statement should be tested in different school and classroom settings.

**Students' assessment**

Monitoring standards in the Greek education system is identified with regulating input in the form of standard curricula and textbooks (OECD, 1997); thus, standardisation concerns the prescription of teaching contents. No testing that allows comparison of performance between schools and regions occurs. The conduct of students' assessment is left to the discretion of the teachers, who are given much freedom to form their judgements, since any criteria of assessment prescribed by the state have been found to be, if not vague, not strictly defined; (Moutsios, 1998). Up to the school year 1998-99, the only form of externally developed examinations were these for entrance to higher education, where the principle of "numerus clausus" was applied and two out of three candidates were doomed to fail; this imbalance between supply and demand for higher education has caused severe problems. The perspective of the university entrance examinations has dominated secondary education, also influencing the years prior to it. Greek parents reserve a considerable amount of the family budget for offering their children private supportive courses for success in these examinations (OECD, 1982, 1997). According to the new system, that is currently subject to discussions and changes, students must take examinations, organised by the Ministry of Education, at the end of the last two secondary grades; students are allocated to tertiary schools of their choice according to their secondary school leaving certificate whose grade depends on their performance in these grades (Presidential Decree 246/1998). The new system is said to have exacerbated the competition, stress and examination-centred nature of the secondary school system (Papamatthaiou, 2000).

Overall, Greek parents traditionally attach great value to high grades, often complaining to teachers who do not assign them to their children (Kallen, 1996). Receiving good education, particularly university level, is immensely valued, because it is traditionally seen as the main avenue to a good job, mainly in the safety of the civil or banking services, as

technical and vocational education was traditionally poorly developed and not relevant to the economy's needs; moreover, the current unemployment rate (approximately ten percent) is not negligible (Kassotakis, 2000). Within this context, the less heavily assessed subjects receive – as typically happens in examination-oriented systems – little attention. There is a long-established distinction among secondary school subjects as "first-rate" or "second-rate"; this distinction can be seen in the different amount of teaching time allocated to different subjects. The subjects of religious and political instruction, whose teaching and status in the upper primary grades will be explored, have been commonly considered as "second-rate" (Noutsos, 1979). In the recent changes, religious and political education are taught in the last two upper secondary grades, and are allocated an average of two teaching hours per week out of a total of thirty-one hours (Ministerial Decision Γ'2/6953/1997).

The next section presents issues about curriculum, teaching and assessment at the level of primary education, which caters for children aged six to twelve years and includes six grades.

**Primary curriculum, teaching and assessment**

The curricula for primary school subjects are centrally designed and are uniform for all Greek primary schools. They specify for each subject instructional goals, contents, and teaching time, while the official single textbooks for students and teachers complement and fulfil them. Since 1981, the primary curricula and textbooks have been revised in an effort to replace the established teacher-centred pedagogical approaches with more child-centred ones (OECD, 1997). The teacher was asked not to be a ruler but a coordinator of a working group, abolishing the memorisation of contents and students' passivity (Vougioukas, 1985). Despite these efforts, these characteristics are held to be still present to a great extent (OECD, 1997); however, as previously said, this is something that research should explore. The subjects that are taught today at primary school and their teaching time are presented in table 1 (MoE, 1992).

As can be seen in this table, the content of the primary school curriculum ranges from courses in the basics (reading, writing and arithmetic) to religious education and physical education. These subjects are to be taught in separate periods, whose duration, and the breaks between them, are designated by the state. The two first periods last for forty-five minutes, while the others last for forty (MoE, 1997); these two first periods are to be devoted each day (except one) to the teaching of Greek (MoE, 1993). School advisors check school timetables to ensure that the above statutory requirements are met.

Table 1. The statutory timetable[2] of the Greek primary education[3]

| Subjects | Teaching periods per grade and week | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Α′ | Β′ | Γ′ | Δ′ | Ε′ | ΣΤ′ |
| Religious Education (RE) | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Modern Greek Language | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| Mathematics | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| History | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Environmental Studies | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | | |
| Geography | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Physics | | | | | 3 | 3 |
| Social and Citizenship Education (SCE) | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Art Education | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Physical Education | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| English | | | | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| School life - culture | | | | | | |
| Total teaching hours | 23 | 23 | 25 | 28 | 28 | 28 |
| Maximum teaching hours | 25 | 25 | 27 | 30 | 30 | 30 |

As noted by Noutsos (1979) and Mavrogiorgos (1988, 1989), the study of the school timetable can indicate that different status is assigned to different subjects; for example, some subjects are allocated more time and are typically taught in the early periods, when students are less tired and can concentrate better. Thus, to study the place of a subject, it is illuminating to examine how much teaching time is designated for it and at which hours (the first or the last ones) it is usually taught. The subject of SCE, as shown in the above table, is allocated one period per week; it is given less time than Physical Education and Arts Education (two periods), while Religious Education is also assigned two periods. Using teaching time as a criterion, the two subjects appear to have a low status. Moreover, as noted by previous studies (e.g. Noutsos, 1979; Mavrogiorgos, 1988, 1989; Pasoula, 1998), these subjects are commonly taught in the last two teaching periods of the day, while the first ones are dedicated to the teaching of Greek, Mathematics or Physics.

As regards the assessment of Greek primary school pupils, there are no external examinations that could allow performance comparisons between primary schools and teachers. Assessment is mainly oral and informal, left to the teachers' responsibility. It is considered to be formative, conducive to the improvement of the teachers' and students' work. Progression from one grade to the next, as well as to lower secondary school, is automatic. Assessment varies according to the years of primary schooling: in the two first grades, pupils do not receive grades; in the next two, they are graded with "Very Good (A)" or "Good" (B) or "Fairly Good"

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[2] Shading has been added to the subjects of RE and SCE, whose teaching and status will be further investigated by this study, because these subjects are thought to be closely related to moral, social and citizenship education (see last section of this chapter).

[3] At grades Δ′, Ε′ and ΣΤ′, Music, Physical Education and English are taught not by the classroom teacher but by other teachers specialised in these subjects.

(Γ); in the last two grades, the mark scale is 0 – 10 (law 1566/1985; OECD, 1997). Thus, assessment is not equally informal and "loose" throughout primary schooling; presumably, as students grow older, they are prepared for the increasingly examination-oriented climate of the secondary school, where the mark-scale 0-20 is applied and preparation for entering the tertiary education has to occur (Kallen, 1996).

The next section offers additional information about Greek primary school teachers.

**Primary School Teachers**

Greek primary school teachers started receiving university-level education only after 1984; this partially explains why they have been chronically underpaid and had low social status (Massialas et al., 1988). Like all Greek teachers at state schools, primary school teachers are civil servants, who are recruited and then promoted (on the basis of years of experience and additional qualifications) by the state; no local authorities interfere in the allocation of teachers to schools. No inspection takes place; "school inspectors" have been replaced by "school advisors" whose role is to offer "scientific and pedagogic" guidance to the teachers, and to ensure - by checking the timetables and by visiting the schools occasionally - that the teacher follows the statutory curricula and textbooks (Law 1304/1982; MoE, 1987). In the context of a study on moral, social and citizenship education, it is worth noting that teaching in Greece has been traditionally seen as "leitourgima"; this term - also used for the medical profession and the clergy - means the offer of valuable service to the country (Starida, 1994). Specifically, the teacher has been traditionally assigned the role of helping to conserve the traditional moral and religious values of Greek culture. This should be also related to the fact that Greek primary school teachers commonly come from the rural or working classes[4], and often express values and beliefs related to their social background - such as the values of traditionalism and obedience (Massialas et al., 1988; Starida, 1991).

With this reference to primary school teachers, the presentation of the Greek education system and the primary school context is concluded. In light of this context, the next part examines some relevant documents.

## MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTATION

This section examines whether and how the educational legislation in force addresses moral, social and citizenship education.

The Greek Constitution states that Greek education pursues:

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[4] The comparatively low salary and lower-class status of the profession makes it unattractive for the children of the upper or even the middle classes (Massialas et al., 1988).

> "the *moral*, intellectual, vocational and physical instruction of the Greeks, the development of *national and religious awareness*, and the *formation of free and responsible citizens*" (Article 16) (emphasis added).

The moral and civic aspects of education, as well as the religious ones, are explicitly addressed. Moral instruction is the first to be mentioned, while religious and national feelings seem to be expected to develop together; democratic citizenship is also addressed. The pursuit of such educational aims can be explained with reference to the religious and democratic components of Greek national history. Terms that may seem to inscribe values are "instruction" and "formation" (of citizens).

The fundamental educational law 1566/1985 states that primary and secondary education aims:

> "to contribute to the *all-round, harmonious and balanced* development of students' mental, psychological and physical powers, so that, regardless of their gender and descent, they have the potential to develop themselves into *integrated personalities* and to *live creatively*.
> In particular, [Greek education] helps students:
> α) *to become free, responsible and democratic citizens*, to *defend national* independence, the territorial integrity of the country and *democracy*, to be inspired by *love for man, life and nature* and to have *faith in* the country and *the original elements of the Christian Orthodox tradition. The freedom of [students'] religious conscience is inviolable.*
> β) To cultivate and develop harmoniously their mind and their body, their aptitudes, interests and skills. To acquire, through their school education, *social identity and conscience*, and to realise and be aware of the social value and equality of mental and manual work. To be informed about and practise the – *proper and beneficial for the human mankind* – use and utilisation of modern civilisation's goods as well as of *the values of our folk tradition.*
> γ) To develop *creative and critical thought* and the idea of *collective effort and co-operation* in order to take initiatives, and with their responsible participation to contribute decisively to society's progress and our country's development.
> δ) To understand the importance of art, science and technology, *to respect human values and to protect and promote culture.*
> ε) To develop the *spirit of friendship and co-operation* with *all* the people of the earth, with the intention of creating *a better world, fair and peaceful*" (section 1) (emphasis added).

Moral, social and citizenship education is embedded in the first general aim which concerns the education of the whole person, as well as in the more specific aims (α, β, γ, δ, ε). Education is thought to be a supporter (e.g. "helps") of students' moral and social development. The listed aims seem to stress democratic and humanitarian values at both a national (α, γ) and a broader level (β, ε). The development of democratic citizenship takes the first position among the five aims (α), involving the internalisation of moral values (β, δ, ε), the acquisition of relevant attitudes (α, β, γ, ε), and the development of social identity and skills (β, γ). The development of democratic citizenship is again cited next to the development of patriotism and religious conscience (α), which is explained with reference to Greek history. With regard to religious

faith, indoctrination – for which religious education has been often blamed, both in Greece and elsewhere (Francis, 1987; Vasilopoulos, 1996) – is stated to be undesirable (α).

A question is how the above aims can be reached; the same law (1566/1985) suggests:

> "*Basic factors* for the realisation of the above aims are:
> α) the *personality and grounding* of the staff in all levels of education,
> β) the *curricula, textbooks and the other teaching materials*, as well as their proper use,
> γ) the ensuring of *all necessary conditions* for running schools well and
> δ) the creation of the necessary *pedagogical climate* with the development of *harmonious interpersonal relationships* in the *school* and the *classroom* and with *respect for every student's personality*" (ibid: section 1) (emphasis added).

As can be seen, the law acknowledges the importance of both the curriculum and the context within which this curriculum is taught. Attention is given to the personality of the teacher (α) and the quality of the human relationships developed in the school (δ). Apart from this section, this law, and any other educational documentation, do not refer to the importance of the context within which the curriculum is taught. Perhaps, this means that more attention is given to the established curricula and textbooks, maybe because these are considered, within a highly centralised system, as subject to central planning and control. Though the social climate and interpersonal relationships are recognised as important, there is no reference to giving students initiatives and opportunities to participate in school life, though the above law mentions, at section 45, that "for the realisation for the aims of primary and secondary education students' participation in school life is necessary." However, the law suggests that students should form classroom and school committees - through which they will participate in the organisation of school life and extra-curricular activities – only at secondary school level. The underlying assumption may be that primary school pupils are not mature enough to take such responsibilities; this means that whether this will occur is mostly left to the classroom teachers.

The same law (1566/1985) specifies the aim for the <u>primary school</u> as generally pursuing "the *multilateral* mental and physical development of students" (ibid: section 4), while one of the stated six specific aims is that "students familiarise themselves gradually with moral, religious, national, humanitarian and other values and organise these in a system of values". The aim of the primary school appears to be in accordance with the two previous aims, because it addresses both the "multilateral" development of the person and education into moral, religious and humanitarian values.

Another legal document (Presidential Decree 583/1982) outlines <u>the aim of the curriculum of the primary school</u> as follows:

> "... what is pursued *in an atmosphere of freedom and speculation* is:
> A) the gradual familiarisation of the student with *moral, religious, national, socio-economic, political, aesthetic, etc. values*.
> Specifically it is sought to develop the following skills and capabilities:
> 1. The *sensitivity* [of the student] to certain situations that express these values.
> 2. The response to and the expression of satisfaction with these values.

3. The *free acceptance and* use of these values as *criteria* and rules of the student's own activity and behaviour within the social and cultural context in which he lives.
4. The connection of these values to one another and their organisation in a *value system* that will constitute a code of behaviour and a basic theory of life.

B) the gradual introduction of the student in the sphere of *knowledge* (...).

Γ) the gradual *socialisation* of the student.

Specifically it is sought to help the student:

1. *to understand* as deeply as possible *his own self and his position in society;*
2. *to understand and appreciate* as deeply as possible *other people* who belong to *different* national, social and cultural groups, with the intention of communication and co-operation;
3. to understand the conditions [not clarified] and to acquire the physical and locomotive skills and processes that are necessary for health and the proper corporal development;
4. *to develop knowledge, habits and attitudes* that will conduce to the student's development into a *citizen with a free spirit and a sense of responsibility and respect for the democratic institutions of the state;*
5. to develop knowledge, habits and rules of behaviour that will conduce to the maintenance and improvement of the *natural environment;*
6. to understand the rapid changes of *a complex world of unpredictable demands* for survival and personal realisation, as well as his obligation to enrich his knowledge and empower his skills during his lifetime" (section 1) (emphasis added).

This statement of aim is in line with the previous ones, addressing the moral, religious (A) and social (A, Γ) education of students. Moral, religious and national values are mentioned together again (A). The initial assertion should be noted, that the above objectives are to be pursued within "an atmosphere of freedom and speculation", while their "free acceptance" by the students (see A, 2) is also mentioned. These references stress, though briefly, the critical role of the context within which the curriculum is taught.

Overall, the above four statements of aims are consistent with each other. They all indicate the moral, social and religious aspects of education as desirable: what is pursued is not only the whole, balanced development of students, but, more specifically, their education into the moral, religious, socio-economic, political values of Greek culture. Additionally, the quality of the context within which the curriculum is taught is acknowledged as necessarily conducive, along with the taught curriculum, to the achievement of the above aims. As to what the foundations of these aims may be, it should be remembered that, as Kassotakis (2000) argued, the preservation of Greek history, tradition, culture, Orthodox religion and the Modern Greek language are considered essential components of the national identity, and are expected to be accomplished through education. These elements can be seen in the practices and customs of schools, such as the prayer that starts the assembly every morning, the attendance at church services (commonly before closing for Christmas and Easter holidays) [5], and the celebration of two national celebrations per year (sometimes this involves participation in students' parades

[5] Until two decades ago, teachers had to take pupils to church on Sunday and on special religious days.

too) (Papastamatis, 1988). These activities carry values and messages, and it is part of studies like the present one to examine whether and how they can influence moral, social and citizenship education. At the same time, things are changing: there is a growing influx of immigrants (Markou, 1994), while Greece is also a member state of the European Community. In the OECD (1997) report on Greek education, Greek society is said to be still homogeneous, sustained by its deep-rooted Hellenic and Byzantine traditions, by a cohesive, state-supportive religion, and by strong family ties. However, the changes mentioned above are taking place now, and social diversity in terms of race, ethnicity and religion increases with the recent migration flow[6]. Perhaps, as Makrinioti and Solomon (1999) said, this diversity tends to be overlooked, as in the above statements; one reason for this is that they are not very recent.

The examination of these statements raises the questions of whether and to what extent they correspond to the reality of schools. Dimaras (1982), in his review of the stated aims of Greek education since 1952, suggested that the real aims of an education system are not decided by verbal statements but by school practice itself, particularly the school structures and the actions of all participants. He argued that stated aims such as the above "usually remain dead letter" (ibid: 152); perhaps, this is something that research should investigate. Pantelidou-Malouta (1982) said that the legislators and the administrators are the only persons who know in detail the legislative documents; this may be true, as the above statements can be seen only in state documents available from the National Printing Office.

The next part of the chapter moves from the discussion of these statements to examining how moral, social and citizenship education is conceptualised in the curricula of the subjects of 'Social and Citizenship Education' and 'Religious Education' in the sixth grade of the primary school.

## THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN THE CASE OF TWO CURRICULA

The discussion, in this part, of the conceptualisation of moral, social and citizenship education in the two subjects of Religious Education (RE) and "Social and Citizenship Education" (SCE) at grade 6 does not imply that the teaching of other subjects does not contribute to moral, social and citizenship education. The main reason that the study examines the curricula of these two subjects at grade 6 is to limit the focus and make the research feasible for a single student. Social and Citizenship Education is selected because it is closely linked to social and political aspects of education. Religious Education is selected because in the Greek context religious and moral values have traditionally been closely related. It is again for reasons

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[6] It also depends on the context of the school, that is the extent to which it has students of different race, ethnicity or religion.

of limiting the focus that only the curricula at grade 6 are examined, though in the field I observed classes at grades 5 and 4 also. I examine the curricula because the curriculum largely determines the corresponding students' and teachers' textbooks, which are single and uniform throughout Greece (Law 1566/1985). Reference is made to the teachers' textbooks as providing suggestions for pedagogy, which was further explored by observation and interviews. Detailed and full analysis of the textbooks did not occur; I only examined to some extent the teachers' textbooks to examine the recommended pedagogical approaches, while I also considered the students' textbooks when I did teaching, and when I wanted to learn about the taught contents.

**Religious Education (RE) at grade 6**

In the curriculum document for Religious Education at grade 6 – as well as in those for grades 3, 4 and 5 – RE is called "Orthodox Christian Education". This title implies that a Christian-centred character is attributed to the subject and that a confessional approach is adopted. The previously discussed statements of aims also show that it is sought to nurture students in the faith of their country. This can be explained with reference to the close relationship between Hellenism and Orthodoxy throughout the Greek history; moreover, almost all the inhabitants profess Christianity, and the Greek Orthodox Church, to which about 97% adhere, is the established religion of the country (The Europa World Year Book, 2000). Thus, it can be expected that the objectives and contents of the subject address knowledge, beliefs, values and attitudes that are considered central to Orthodox Christianity. However, some teachers, students and families may - partially or fully, explicitly or implicitly – reject this faith, no matter if they are baptized as Christians.

The aim of RE at grade 6 is stated at the end of the respective curriculum document, addressing not only grade 6 but the previous ones too. It says: "students should approach the image of Christ". This aim accords with the title and the Christian-centred character of the subject, as well as with the previously discussed statements. A problem with this aim is that it appears general and vague: approaching Christ can be taken to mean knowing about Christ, his life and teaching, as well as developing a Christian faith. Another problem is that, as said below, this confessional approach may not be agreeable to all parties involved. Notably, the textbook (MoE, 1995) carries the title "Christ is the Truth", while the textbooks for grades 4 and 5 (MoE, 1994a, 1994b) are called "The Way of Christ" and "With Christ in Life" respectively; these titles accord with the stated aims and the confessional approach. Moreover, the teacher's textbook (MoE, 1995) comments on the student textbook contents: "the Christian truth is presented, namely Christ himself, his life, work and teaching... Children are led to learn about the truth, Christ..." These comments underline the confessional approach that the subject follows, particularly presuming that teachers share these beliefs.

The curriculum is organised into general and more specific units, for each contents and aims or objectives are specified (see Appendix 1). It should be noted that the content precedes the aims/objectives, which may mean that more attention is paid to the content. In line with the subject's aim, the contents concentrate on the person of Christ, specifically his teaching to man about "the truth of life" (unit B), his teaching on morally good social behaviour (units D, E) and its realisation in people's living together; these people have been either saints (units H, I) or not (units F, G, H), and have co-existed, across the ages, within the community of the Christian Orthodox Church (units F, G, H and I). Passages from the New Testament are also used (mainly in units B, D and E); this may occur to increase the reliability of the teaching content as well as to familiarise the students with the Bible, in line with the aims of unit C. This direct reference to the Bible can be helpful in that it gives students the opportunity to consider a fundamental source for the dominant (in Greece) religion and decide for themselves. Further, the curriculum makes extensive use of the parables (unit D), which is also helpful because simple words are preferable to complex religious messages. The curriculum also locates the Christian moral messages in the life of the Church community (units F and G), to which not only national but also international dimensions are given (see unit H). These references to social life are important in that they locate Christian faith and morality within living with others. As part of co-existing with others, the curriculum refers to worship (units C, F, G and I), where students are encouraged to participate (e.g. unit G, themes 2, 4; unit I, themes 2, 3). The problem here is that it is taken for granted that children and their families, or teachers, are Christian believers and churchgoers, which may not to be the case.

The aims (of the general units) and the objectives (of the more specific units or themes) begin by referring to "children" or "they", which fits with the child-centred approach that was pursued in the Greek primary curriculum reform in the 1980s. The following table shows the verbs that the aims and objectives use, as well as their frequency:

Table 2. Verbs used in the stated *aims/ objectives* of the RE curriculum

| | *Verb* | *Frequency* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|
| AIMS | To learn that / about | 6 | 30% |
| | To approach the content / be informed of, etc. | 4 | 20% |
| | To realise / understand | 8 | 40% |
| | To become familiar with | 1 | 5% |
| OBJECTIVES | To learn that / about | 26 | 24.8% |
| | To become informed of, come to know, etc. | 9 | 8.6% |
| | To realise / Understand | 40 | 38.1% |
| | To appreciate | 17 | 16.2% |
| | To feel (joy, the need to, responsible for) | 5 | 4.8% |
| | To be sensitised to (participate, use, approach) | 6 | 5.7% |
| | Learn to be real | 1 | 0.9% |
| | To be practiced into (chanting) | 1 | 0.9% |

As can be seen, the aims emphasise acquisition of knowledge and information (altogether 50%), mainly about facts and persons concerned with Christianity (see Appendix 1); the objectives also refer extensively to the acquisition of knowledge and information (33.4%). In the aims and objectives, the phrases "realise/understand that" (40% and 38.1% respectively) do not concern factual knowledge only but also touch upon students' feelings and beliefs; these, as well as moral attitudes and behaviours, are directly targeted by the objectives to a significant extent (27.9%) through the use of verbs and phrases such as "appreciate", "feel", "be sensitised to" and "learn to be real". Overall, there seems to be more focus on knowledge acquisition, which can be explained with reference to the fact that in Greece, primary school children are supposed to learn basic information about the religion of their country. The references to children's emotions can be explained with reference to the confessional approach which is followed.

The verbs used in the aims and the objectives do not describe specific or easily observable activities (e.g. "to realise that"); they are too broad to specify the intended results of teaching, and do not help the teacher to plan the lesson towards their achievement and to monitor to what extent the students have reached them. Perhaps, as Moutsios (1996) noted with reference to the subject of Environmental Studies at grade 3, the curriculum planners had difficulty in clarifying the objectives or did not pay much attention to doing so. Pedagogical suggestions can be expected in the respective Teacher's Textbook (MoE, 1995), which says:

> "The teacher and the children discuss each theme starting from facts of daily life. Thus, pupils are encouraged to understand some concepts and experiences from the rich orthodox tradition and, what is important, connect them with their life" (ibid: 5).

An "indicative teaching plan" is also presented:

> "The teacher, when organising each lesson, should always start from students' thoughts. In the current textbook, there may be a limited number of child-centred lessons, but this does not mean that the lesson should turn out to be preaching or presenting knowledge that is not relevant to children's lives. In every lesson, it should be attempted to answer children's enquiries so that the elements of Orthodox tradition become understood and the Truth of Orthodoxy is turned into daily experience of people's living together" (ibid: 8).

As can be seen, attention is given to students' experiences and ideas, while suggestions are also articulated for moving away from preaching and knowledge acquisition, but the inquired issue is what relationship teachers have with the Orthodox tradition, so that they could help children understand it and relate it to their lives. This is something that empirical studies should explore, and is partially addressed later by my research.

The teacher's textbook also mentions taking students to church service. This happens in Greek schools at least twice a year, and I sometimes observed it as part of my empirical research. The teacher's textbook says that church going "should be a well-organised approach to, and contact with, the worship activities and the temple arrangements. It is recommended to take children to church after the teacher has arranged it with the priest, and also to take few children each time (ibid: 10)." These recommendations presuppose an approach that seeks to

educate children in the religious traditions of their country. Trying to give them preliminary explanations about church instead of simply taking them there can be helpful as offering them some information that they can use to understand the church services and choose for themselves whether they would like to attend them themselves.

Overall, RE at grade 6 is distinguished for a Christianity-centred, confessional approach; though the general characteristics of Greek society and education seem to justify this approach, the increasing social diversity and the different ideas that teachers and parents may hold about the Orthodox Christian religion, can render this approach problematic. Much depends on what happens in classrooms; for example, one teacher may use RE for preaching, another may mean the RE lessons as times for stories, another may cultivate discriminative attitudes against non-Christians, or another may judge the religious status quo. It is among the intentions of this study, and should be part of further research, to address these issues.

The next section presents the case of "Social and Citizenship Education" (SCE) at grade 6, by examining the curriculum document and the teacher's textbook.

**"Social and Citizenship Education" (SCE) at grade 6**

The subject of "Social and Citizenship Education" (SCE) was introduced in Greek primary education in 1984, within a range of reforms of the primary curricula (OECD, 1997). The aim of the subject, as stated in the respective curriculum (Presidential Decree 168/1984), is:

> "to help students: α) to learn about the organisation, function and values of Greek society; β) to understand the importance that the social and political institutions hold for the individual and the society; γ) to develop their critical thinking on current social problems; δ) to cultivate their social conscience so as to participate responsibly and creatively in the life of a democratic society; ε) to *acquire the necessary sensitivity* towards the *universal community*" (emphasis added).

This is a multi-faceted aim, addressing the development of knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking, as well as democratic and humanitarian attitudes and values at both national and international level. These points are, as was discussed in chapter two, important for educating citizens. The SCE curriculum is organised into five general units, which include a number of objectives and themes (see Appendix 2). In contrast to the RE curriculum, the objectives for each theme precede the contents.

The verbs used in the stated objectives are presented in the table below:

Table 3. Verbs used in the stated objectives of the SCE curriculum

| *Verb* | *Frequency* | *Percent* |
|---|---|---|
| Learn about | 5 | 20.8 % |
| Analyse/examine/compare/evaluate/recognise | 7 | 29.2 % |
| Realise | 6 | 25 % |
| Appreciate | 2 | 8.3 % |
| Become sensitised / strengthen will | 2 | 8.4 % |

As can be seen, cognitive objectives cover half of the stated objectives (50%). In contrast to the RE curriculum, only about half of the cognitive objectives (20.8%) are general (e.g. "to learn that"); specific cognitive procedures are included to a significant extent (29.2%) (e.g. "to compare"), which can be helpful for planning the teaching and learning. The objectives of the SCE themes also address, more or less explicitly, students' attitudes and values (e.g. "to realise that", "to appreciate", "to become sensitised"). What these objectives of SCE overlook is the development of students' argumentative, communicative and participatory skills, which are necessary for democratic citizenship; only the teacher's textbook, as explained below, provides for this through some suggestions on pedagogy.

The contents, which are presented in Appendix 2, are organised in five broad areas (units) and themes (cited within the parentheses) as follows:

> "α) organisation of *social life* (*family*, *communities* / the *state*), β) *state* and *democracy* (*forms* of political government / democracy and democratic *constitutions*), γ) *Greek democracy* (historical *background* / *principles* of democracy and democratic *institutions*), δ) *care* provided by the *state* (life, health, entertainment / *education*, *work*, *development* / *welfare* state / *economy* / protection of the *environment*), ε) "us" and the *world* (*nations* of the earth / international *competition* and need for *peace*)" (italics added).

As can be seen, the content refers to socio-political units, systems of government, institutions and procedures. A prominent place is given to the concept of democracy, which can be explained with reference to the democratic traditions and the current political system of Greece. Similar to the aim, the content expands from Greek society (γ) to the universal society (ε); this is considered to be essential for citizenship education in the globalised context (Cogan et al., 1997). Regarding the "reformist" and "radical" approaches to citizenship education, in which the socio-political structures are critically examined and questioned (as discussed in the relevant section of chapter two), the above contents do not seem to promote them; for example, the themes on state welfare seem to present a state caring for the citizens and never doing anything wrong. This can be explained with reference to the fact that the SCE curriculum document has, like all Greek curricula, required ministerial approval and been signed as a presidential decree. It is important to note, though, that, despite such central directives, the extent of conformity or radicalism expressed when teaching SCE has much to do with the morale and pedagogy of individual teachers. It is a task of research to investigate the approaches to citizenship education which are actually used in SCE.

Before any observation of SCE classes, an insight into pedagogy is provided by the following extract from the teacher's textbook (MoE, 1984: 7-8):

> "The student's textbook is *not* a book that offers specific knowledge only, e.g. what are the duties and the obligations of the citizen. It is a *tool* with which, as well as with the teacher's help, students will *analyse* and *understand* some aspects of the political system... In this respect students *do not have to memorise* the content of the book... A

*theoretical* treatment of the issues included is *not compatible* with the aim of the subjects and is *beyond* the cognitive powers of the students at this level. Teaching should be *based on students' experiences* and set out from *contemporary reality*, which children should be enabled to analyse and understand. Teaching should help and encourage all children to participate actively in the discussion and analysis of the issues involved. This will be achieved if the teacher faces all students in a democratic spirit and respects all views... We insist on *groupwork* because we believe that it fits very well with the characteristics of the subject. The basis of the teaching will be the *discussion* of questions and issues that each unit poses... the questions of the students... the dialogue... the expression of different views. Only in a very few cases will the teacher need to use monologue to offer ready knowledge to students, and in this case he/she will take care that knowledge is connected to contemporary reality" (emphasis added).

These suggestions advocate a move away from whole-class teaching - which has been dominant in Greek education in the past – and gives space to children's expression of experiences and views. The insistence on discussion and groupwork can contribute to education for democratic citizenship, because the latter requires that students become practised in discussing with others. It is also important that attention is paid to contemporary realities; elaboration on them can avoid creating an idealised picture of the socio-political context, even if the prescribed textbook sometimes moves towards this direction (as indicated by research findings such as those of Makrinioti and Solomon, 1999; Papathanasiou, 1988). At another point, the teacher's textbook also recommends the use of "contemporary press extracts, news, printed materials, e.g. photos from the newspapers" (ibid: 6); this can help keep the teaching contents updated, especially because rapid changes occur worldwide, and the current student's textbook was written in 1984. Research would be required to investigate to what extent and in which ways the above guidelines are kept.

The above characteristics of SCE, as prescribed by the curriculum and teacher's textbook, render it relevant to moral, social and citizenship education. Generally, the relevance that RE and SCE - or any other subjects - can have to such education cannot alone make the subjects beneficial for students' development as persons. In the absence of adequate interest in them among all the parties involved (children, teachers and parents), as well as in the absence of appropriate pedagogical approaches, the subjects' potential contribution can be reduced. It is within the scope of the present study to examine the realities of the teaching of the two subjects. To yield richer and more diverse data, classes of both subjects at grade 5 were observed, while the teaching of RE was sometimes observed at grade 4 also.

The next part concludes the chapter by considering moral, social and citizenship education as a field of study in Greece.

## MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AS A FIELD OF STUDY IN GREECE

Empirical research in education in Greece has been limited (OECD, 1997; Noutsos, 1981). The field related to students' political socialization, through both implicit and explicit ways, is considered especially to be unexplored (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999; Pantelidou-Malouta, 1982). Noutsos (1982) suggested that this stems from the prominence, in the Greek context, of the idea that the school should be politically neutral; this may in turn stem from the memories of the bitter civil war of the 1950s and 1960s.

There have been, though, some attempts to study socio-political aspects of Greek education. Mavrogiorgos (1983a, 1983b), after introducing and discussing – drawing on British and American publications – the term "para-curriculum", displayed how this becomes evident, in Greek schools, through the teaching methods, the distribution of teaching time (e.g. different subjects are taught in separate teaching hours), and the tests and examinations. Both Mavrogiorgos (1983b) and Noutsos (1982) discussed issues of school discipline, behaviour and rules, and some of their implications, but they did not provide relevant empirical data. Stavriti-Anastasopoulou (1982) referred to students' committees in secondary education, but did not provide empirical data either. The organization of school space has been analysed in more detail; Mavrogiorgos discussed it with reference to classroom life and pedagogy (for example, the teacher's desk in front and the students' desks one behind each other suggest a teacher-centred pedagogy), while Noutsos (1982) and Solomon (1992) analysed the organization of the whole school space. Makrinioti's and Papastamatis' (1988) doctoral research investigated Greek primary classrooms, indicating that teachers were somewhat authoritarian, and that the traditional style of teaching was associated with a less positive attitude of pupils towards school. Kavouri and Ellis (1998) used a revised version of an organizational climate instrument to investigate, with an eye to school effectiveness and school improvement, school climate as perceived by Athens primary school teachers, pointing out that many schools appeared to be high in disengagement, restrictiveness and frustration. Overall, although there are references to the socio-political importance of school life, limited data collection on it has occurred.

More research has been conducted on textbooks; it has indicated that many of them have an ethnocentric character, while elements of class and gender discrimination have been recently reduced (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). As to the subjects of Religious Education and Social and Citizenship Education, whose teaching and status are explored in the present study, there have been some efforts to investigate them. As regards Religious Education, its curricula and textbooks have been analysed (e.g. Terezis & Koustourakis, 1996; Vagianos, 1989), but the realities concerning its teaching have not been explored. As regards Social and Citizenship Education, its curricula and textbooks have been also examined (e.g. Helmis, 1995;

Koustourakis, 1994), and how these treat some issues and concepts such as democracy, the welfare state, and national identity has been further explored, the results suggesting that non-critical approaches have been followed (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999; Papathanasiou, 1988; Sotiropoulos & Felonis, 1988a, 1988b). The teaching and status of SCE have scarcely been examined in schools. Moreover, the possible relationship between the teaching of the two subjects and the school ethos has not been explored either.

The current study seeks to examine through unstructured observation, interviews and questionnaires how these subjects are taught in five schools and what their status appears to be, while consideration of the school and classroom ethos will also be attempted at the same time.

The next chapter discusses the methodology employed in the empirical study of five Greek primary schools.

# CHAPTER FOUR
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In research, each strategy has advantages and disadvantages. Certain factors should be considered while making methodological decisions: the research aims and questions, and the resources of time, funding and equipment (Robson, 1993).

This study investigates the development of moral, social and citizenship education in five Greek primary schools, by considering both their curriculum and their ethos. The research is exploratory in nature, and focuses on the school structures, behaviours and relationships that relate to students' moral and social development, as well as on underlying values and messages. The dynamics that develop within, and between, the ethos and the curriculum, as regards moral, social and citizenship education, are also explored.

This chapter discusses the main characteristics of this study, and the procedures of fieldwork and analysis, as well as some serious methodological issues including validity.

## MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

This section explains the main characteristics of the study: the case study research approach, its mostly ethnographic techniques, its dynamic nature, the role of theory in research, and the researcher's role.

### Case Study Research

I conducted a multiple case study of five primary schools, which had both differences and similarities. Generally, case study research is preferred when 'how' or 'why' questions are posed, when the focus is on real-life contexts (Yin, 1994). Case study research recognises the importance of the context, and attempts to investigate the complexities of reality - not only what subjects say about it (Stake, 1995). It allows rich description of values, perceptions and actions of persons, whom it sees in a genuine context, and is also open and flexible to evolving issues and challenges that emerge in that context (Geertz, 1973; Simons, 1995). The commitment to investigating what actually goes on in schools - through first-hand observation and discussions with those directly involved - is fundamental to educational research, particularly in the field of moral, social and citizenship education and school ethos, where contradictions and tensions are not uncommon. With reference to the curriculum studies area, case study research is considered appropriate for

approaching the structures and ideas which underlie the taught curriculum (Walker, 1986). This approach can be interesting in the study of centralised education systems (such as the Greek one), because the diversity of teaching a prescribed curriculum in different contexts can be explored.

Case study research is sometimes criticised for lacking rigor and the possibility of scientific generalisation, which is fundamental to academic work (Golby, 1994). It is true that studies concerning one or a few cases are only partial accounts of the whole population; however, statistical generalisation is not the only target. Yin (1994) distinguished between statistical and analytical generalisation; statistical generalisation is from sample to population, while analytical generalisation concerns generalising a particular set of results to a broader theory; it is the latter kind of generalisation that case study research pursues. Hammersley (1992) suggested that case study research could even claim generalisability to a relatively large, finite population. Comparing case study with surveys, he suggested that there is not a complete distinction between them and that their difference is a matter of degree, or of trade-offs; he explained that choosing a case study rather than a survey involves obtaining greater detail and accuracy of information about particular cases at the cost of being less able to generalise effectively to a larger number of cases. He claimed that the weaker basis of case study research for generalisation does not mean that there is no such basis at all, or that the generalisability of the findings cannot be improved, for example, through some strategies which he recommended. One of them is that, if resources allow, researchers examine with ethnographic techniques larger numbers of cases, which could be extended to the status of a survey. Another strategy, which was followed in this study, is that the cases to be studied should cover some of the main dimensions of the suspected heterogeneity of the population in which we are interested. These methods can alleviate the relative weakness of case study research, and allow the generalisability of findings to a large, finite population of cases.

Generally, studying a single case can promote understanding; to quote Stenhouse (1978: 29), 'good chess is learned by the study of many individual games'. Moreover, it is the researcher's role to go beyond describing the findings, to relate them to the present state of theory, to discuss the 'typicality' of the case studied, to consider implications, and thus to move beyond the confines of the case (Yin, 1994). In MacDonald and Walker's (1975: 3) words,

> "case study is the way of the artist, who achieves greatness when, through the portrayal of a single instance locked in time and circumstance, he communicates enduring truths about the human condition."

As suggested by Simons (1996), this is the paradox of case study: by studying the uniqueness of the particular case, we come to understand the universal. As Pring (2000) explained, the 'singularity' of each case should not blind us to its unique features; all situations are unique in some aspects but not in others, in the same way as there is something distinctive about each individual, and yet

something in common between this individual and others. In turn, it is the readers' responsibility to look critically at the case studied - which may be typical in some respects and atypical in others - and to ask what is in it that can relate to their own situation (Walker, 1980). Thus, the uniqueness of each case does not make the case irrelevant to other cases, although this may happen to a great extent when 'extreme' cases are selected. Therefore, a serious issue appears to be how one can justify studying a specific case or set of cases. As Rogan and MacDonald (1985) argued, the appropriateness of generalisation from a case study depends largely on an understanding of the context of that case and the ways in which that context may approximate conditions elsewhere. How I selected the schools which I studied is discussed later.

**A mostly Qualitative Approach**

'Some case studies are qualitative studies, some are not...' (Stake, 1994: 236). Studying the development of moral, social and citizenship education requires the exploration of values, attitudes, behaviours and relationships; to provide analytical, rich and in-depth accounts of these, words are more suitable than numbers (Finch, 1985). Moreover, structured, quantitative tools specify issues to be studied and exclude other evolving, unexpected ones. Thus, I decided to take a mostly qualitative approach to my research. The qualitative tools which I mostly employed were observations and relatively informal conversations, as ethnographers do; I also decided to often obtain participant observer status, as occurs in ethnography (Hammersley, 1998), because this would greatly help me immerse myself in the school settings and learn 'from inside'. Adopting ethnographic tools and participant status has not entitled my research to be considered ethnography; classic ethnographic fieldwork requires extensive stay in the field, commonly focusing on a single case or very few (ibid; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), while I examined five schools, and I did not stay more than six weeks in any of them.

I decided that the only quantitative tool which I would use should be a questionnaire for examining the attitudes of larger groups of pupils (of grade 6) to the subjects of RE and SCE as well as for comparing different teachers and schools. The questionnaire included a semantic differential scale and some open questions (see Appendix).

**Theory in Research**

It has sometimes been suggested that case study is 'free' and mainly concerns keeping a sharp eye and being open to new impressions; nevertheless, case study research also requires discipline, because there are definite research questions to be answered (Stake, 1995). Guidance is also provided by the relevant literature, which pinpoints key issues, contributes to the shaping of

ideas, and influences the data collection and analysis (Robson, 1993). For example, as regards my study, the existent research directed my attention towards exploring the school ethos, and pinpointed some key features of it (such as teacher-pupil relationships and student participation).

Generally, there have been serious doubts about whether pure observation can occur, as nobody goes into the field free of anything in the nature of theory (Sturman, 1999). I had acquainted myself with the relevant theory and I had identified, while orienting myself in the literature, some issues to be explored. I cannot claim that my theoretical preparation was perfect, in the sense that, as discussed in chapter two, some key concepts involved in the study - such as morality, citizenship and school ethos - are very complex. Moreover, as Ball (1984) suggested, fieldwork could be dangerously delayed until one acquires a good command of the theory development in the area; I could spend more than two years studying morality itself. Any reading which I have done - before, during and after the fieldwork – helped me in two ways. First, it pinpointed some key features of school ethos that I had to investigate; secondly, it helped me to reflect on the findings in and across cases, and to try to illuminate and enrich them with further research, reading and analysis.

**Flexibility**

The qualitative, ethnographic case study research approach is distinguished by its flexibility (Stake, 1995), which allowed, in this study, for the exploration of evolving and unexpected issues, as well as of the dynamics developed between, and within, the school ethos and the curriculum. I thought that many of these elements would be unfamiliar to me, also given my little previous knowledge, and the uniqueness of each site. My previous experience and theoretical preparation offered me only some ideas about what would be relevant to my study; apart from this guidance, I did not want to be limited from seeing further issues. Some evolving issues emerged from observation or participants' comments; for example, I was impressed to be told by teachers, and sometimes to observe, that, as regards the impact of religion on moral behaviour, many children who were characterised as 'difficult' or 'aggressive' seemed to be very touched by religion (see school A). Another evolving issue had to do with specific influences of the school's social context; for example, children at the Athens school C were oriented, mostly by their middle- or upper-class parents, to pursuing high grades, and saw school in career-oriented and competitive ways; however, children in the rural school E were brought up to expect other futures than higher education and were much less competitive.

My pursuing an open-eyed perspective also helped me to work on a continuous follow-up of the information I gathered; this enabled the shaping of a more holistic view of the issues and

contexts which I investigated. Such a view accords with the bounded nature of each case, which is a system that develops a wholeness that is more than the total of the parts (Sturman, 1999).

**The Researcher's Role**

Conducting case study research over an extended period of time at each site suggests that the researcher is likely to develop intimate and informal relationships with the subjects under study. Moreover, school ethos largely concerns interpersonal relationships within each school. To investigate these relationships, I felt that I had to get a 'feel' of each school, which needed both 'being there' and 'sharing' (Ball, 1984). Thus, I needed to become an active member of each school rather than a detached observer; to achieve this, I offered to help in anyway I could. Starting from keeping an eye on the pupils at the breaktime, I gradually took on more responsibilities: I helped pupils with their work when the classroom teacher was present; I covered lessons when I was asked to; I went on school trips; I occupied pupils during their free time, and helped teachers with decorative and administrative work. Sometimes, especially towards the end of my stay at each school, I felt that my role of 'participant-as-observer' worked at the expense of the 'observer-as-participant' role, that is, the needs of participating dominated the needs of observing (Gold, 1958). Nevertheless, even then, I could learn 'from inside' (e.g. how teachers got along with each other)); some teachers even told me that I had become 'a member of the school'. To reduce the possibility that I would become an insider who would overlook matters through familiarity, I often attempted to operate as a 'complete observer' (ibid.), that is to assume a passive role and minimize my presence at the scene, to avoid 'contaminating' it. I think that there was a tension between my roles as a participant and as a non-participant in students' and teachers' eyes; for example, students frequently wanted to talk to me when I observed lessons, though I wanted to keep at a distance. I sometimes tried to avoid teaching in classes where I collected much data; however, this may have prevented me from acquiring useful data. I should also note that towards the end of my stay at each school, when I became more involved in the school context, I sometimes found that I had to push myself to take notes, as it was easy to overlook doing so while being busy with my participant role, for example, when teaching for the whole day. I found that the information I elicited at this stage was very important because it emerged within natural settings and could be triangulated there with information obtained through other subjects and methods.

Regarding my own values and assumptions and their influence on my research, it should be first noted that researchers cannot be 'neutral'- consider, for example, their selection of the topic. Research is a personal and interpersonal matter; it relates to the researcher's biography and to the relationships that he/she develops to the persons and situations under study. Moreover, as

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) noted, we are part of the social world that we study. At the same time, a researcher should strive to move towards objectivity. In my case, like anyone involved in education, I had some ideas on what may be better or worse in terms of students' moral and social development; I had also read some relevant literature. In the field, I often avoided commenting on what I saw or heard - though I was often asked to do so - so as not to cause reactions that would not have occurred ordinarily. In observation, I remained relatively 'neutral'– for example, I did not show my disapproval when a teacher hit children – so as not to influence the situation. During informal discussions and interviews, I wanted the subjects to be as communicative and authentic as possible; towards this end, I often expressed alternative viewpoints (that were not always mine) to arouse their interest and take the conversation further.

Although the researcher's influence is mainly discussed in literature on methodology with reference to the data collection, this influence affects data analysis too (Miles & Huberman, 1994). My assumptions and values impacted on which issues I focused and how I interpreted the relevant data. For example, my assumption, which had derived from both my experience and reading, that within one school there are notable differences between classroom teachers, directed my attention, through the data analysis and in writing my analyses, to the distinct classroom ethos that different teachers could establish.

## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

This part delineates the procedures for collecting and analysing the data. It considers the selection of the cases, the negotiation of admission, and the establishment of rapport. It discusses the sampling that occurred within the cases, the data sources, and the data collection process. The procedures of data analysis and coding are also presented.

### Case Selection

A multiple case study design was preferred to a single case, so as to explore moral, social and citizenship education at different schools, though variation can develop within a single school. It was also thought that the evidence from a multiple case study is generally more robust; as was mentioned above, a weakness of case study research is its weak claim to statistical generalisation. Against this, researchers often conduct multi-site case studies, trying to select a 'representative' set of cases. The multiple-site design also enables the development of theory through comparative analysis between cases that have similarities and differences (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Precisely, '[if a] single case can indicate a general conceptual category or property, a few more cases can

confirm the indication' (ibid: 30), enhancing the process of theory generation through comparative analysis. I was interested in looking for similarities and differences that could relate to different contextual features of schools, as I was influenced by previous research that had underlined the impact of the school's social context on its ethos or culture.

My selection of schools was influenced by Hammersley's (1992) previously mentioned suggestion, that the cases to be studied should cover some of the main dimensions of heterogeneity of the population in which we are interested. I was also influenced by Golby's (1994) suggestion, that it is important to develop a sense of the 'typicality' of the case(s) studied, so as to reduce the limitations of concentrating on such cases. Similarly, Bassey (1981) stressed the need for the 'relatability' of the study to other teachers' situations. Patton (1980) had discussed 'typicality' – using the terms 'typical case', as opposed to 'extreme' or 'deviant' cases – as justified when one avoids studying a case whose logic and results would be dismissed as outright because that case is known to be special, deviant, unusual or extreme. Apart from these points, guidance was offered by previous research on school ethos (or climate or culture), which indicated, as discussed in chapter two, that a school's socio-economic background influences its ethos. Thus, I initially decided to study three schools, one each in lower-, middle- and upper-class areas respectively. I would look for state schools, for two reasons. One was that Greek private schools require, contrary to state schools, payment of tuition fees, so they could not be seen as lower-class; another was that private schools are atypical cases in Greek education, where the private sector is small (OECD, 1997). I decided to look for these three state schools in Athens, not only because more than one third of the population live there, but also because Athens includes all socio-economic levels (OECD, 1997). Practical considerations – the schools were accessible by bus (see Ball, 1984) – were also influential.

To explore the religious dimension that has often been assigned to moral education, especially in the Greek context, I decided to also study a fourth school with distinctive religious features. Since all Greek state schools have the same aims and none of them claims to have a distinct religious or political orientation, I looked for a private school. The school that I selected was, among the other Athens private schools, one of only two whose advertisement suggested a religious orientation. Access to this school (which I coded as school A) was facilitated by the fact that I had done some supply teaching there in the past. I also thought that the private, and not state, ownership of the school was another contextual feature which could influence its ethos: the teachers there did not have permanent posts, contrary to the state schools, where the teachers are civil servants appointed, and paid, by the state to permanent positions (sometimes, to permanent posts in particular schools).

To gain access to the three Athens schools in different socio-economic locations (coded in this study as schools B, C and D), I had to apply for permission to the Ministry of Education. The permission that was granted to me allowed access to all the schools in three vast areas of Athens, which included locations of different socio-economic status; this allowed me to select from among plenty of schools in each zone. Little educational research has taken place in Greece (see Noutsos, 1981; OECD, 1997), which means that Greek teachers are unfamiliar with visiting researchers; I also considered that investigating values and relationships in a school is very sensitive. Under these circumstances, I considered that some key informants in the schools would be very helpful. I had a colleague who taught in a school in a distinctively working-class area, while the mother of a friend worked in a school whose students were characterised by teachers as predominantly middle-class; when they both invited me to do research in their schools, I thought of trying to go there. I knew that I had to check whether these schools claimed to do anything different from other schools in terms of moral, social and citizenship education – which would make them 'extreme cases' (Patton, 1980). Since this did not occur, and the principals of these schools accepted my request for admission, while some teachers there also expressed their openness to my research, I decided to conduct two of my case studies there (coded as schools B and D). I do not think that the above circumstances that enabled my entry made my sampling opportunistic in any damaging way.

While proceeding with my research in these four Athens schools, comparisons emerged, related to differences in their location. Moreover, some teachers who had previously taught in rural schools suggested that behaviours, values and underlying assumptions differed largely between city and rural schools. I thought that further comparisons would be likely if I also included a rural school. I asked for access to a rural school in a village of Thessalia (five hours' journey north of Athens). I selected this school (coded as school E) because I could find accommodation in the village, as I knew some people there, who could also give me some information about both the school and its social context; relevant studies (e.g. Grosch, 1988; Heywood, 1992) indicated that close bonds commonly develop between small communities and their schools. This school did not seem to be an 'extreme' case: on an exploratory visit which I made (February 2000), I was assured by some teachers and villagers that this school was not very different from other rural schools: firstly, the pupils belonged to a mixture of financial levels; secondly, nothing different from other rural schools was said to occur in terms of moral, social and citizenship education.

**Negotiating admission and building rapport**

To gain access to the state schools B, C, D and E, I applied to the Ministry of Education for permission, which was considered only after the rationale, the research tools, and other relevant

information were presented. Although it is ethically correct to provide this information to all likely to be involved (Simons, 1995), the teachers were not asked about my research - this can be explained with reference to the high centralisation of the Greek education system. In the case of the private school A, permission was asked from, and given by, the school principal.

As underlined by Ball (1990), permission by the Head or other authorities may provide the researcher with entry, but possibly not with access; access means having the cooperation of teachers or students, which is not guaranteed by such permission. Realistically, in fieldwork 'multiple negotiations of microaccess' occur (ibid: 159). I also knew that it was ethically correct to have the informed consent of those who were to participate in my research; that is, they should agree to do so only after they learnt extensively about it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Generally, there are problems with obtaining this consent and establishing rapport: teachers can feel suspicious or hostile towards a researcher, if they feel that he/she seeks to evaluate them or take something from them (Ball, 1984). I thought that such tensions might escalate with Greek teachers, because little empirical research on Greek education has taken place, and primary school teachers started to receive university status education only in the 1980s (Starida, 1991). To reduce any difficulties, I talked to teachers personally about my research and I made clear that they could co-operate with me, or interrupt doing so, when they wanted to. However, as discussed later, informed consent where subjects know everything possible about the research was not very feasible. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) noted, giving a full picture of the research at the beginning of it to everyone involved is not very prudent, because unless the researcher can build a trusting relationship with the subjects of research rapidly, they may refuse access or be reserved in ways that they would not be later in the fieldwork, when more rapport and trust has been established. Apart from this concern, I could not explain to teachers the range of implicit messages, values and evolving issues under study, partly because I did not know them all myself, and partly because I was afraid that fuller explanations could make teachers put on a 'better face'.

What greatly helped to build rapport was the fact that I did not feel or behave as an evaluator of their work; given my young age and my limited classroom experience, I really sought to learn from them, especially from the veteran teachers. What was also helpful was my offering to help the teachers in any way I could, being a primary school teacher myself. I was gradually entrusted with more work to do, and was thanked for my help, which was greatly appreciated. Moreover, to avoid giving an impression of assertiveness, I took a low profile and proceeded gradually to my research (Miles & Huberman, 1994); I started with the friendlier teachers, carefully proceeding to others. Establishing rapport was greatly facilitated by 'key informants'. These were, in schools B and D, the two teachers who kindly invited me to their schools to do research; there

were also, in all schools, teachers who invited me to attend or to participate in their activities, directed me to issues and persons of potential interest to me, provided valuable data and also encouraged others to do so (Ball, 1984; Burgess, 1985). It was also important that I stayed at each school for a relatively long period (from three to six weeks), and that I was spending at least one hour daily in the staffroom, often having coffee and lunch with the teachers, and sometimes going out with some of them. The situation differed from school to school; for example, teachers at school A, who were very busy with preparing for lessons and correcting students' work, had less time and willingness to talk than the teachers in schools B, D and E, who were more relaxed. Moreover, within each school, not all the teachers were equally helpful and friendly.

Building rapport with students was easier. My frequent presence in the playground at breaktime, and my participation in extra-curricular activities gave me opportunities to talk to them. Further factors helped me approach children: my being and looking younger than their teachers, my often teaching handicrafts to them (which they appeared to find pleasant), as well as my identity as both a teacher and a research *student*. My interest in their school life and their opinions about it, as well as my writing a thesis about it, appealed to children, many of whom often invited me to their classes and activities. Through informal discussions, they gave me many and valuable data.

Finally, I felt glad, and also a little awkward, to see that the initial problem of building rapport changed into a problem of exit and withdrawal (see Walker, 1986).

**Sampling within the case**

Within each case, further sampling occurred; generally, when studying a whole primary school, a single researcher must of necessity sample (Ball, 1984). A basic reason is that there are choices to make about persons (e.g. teachers), issues, activities and events that are of more relevance and interest than others (Stake, 1994), while the subjects involved have to be available. Moreover, communication with all available subjects is not the same; I could not always elicit the same quality of data. To take the example of teachers' speaking politically with students, at school B I could directly tell teacher V that I saw him doing so in class - though he would not admit it - because he looked very friendly and open to being questioned. Nonetheless, I could not do the same with all teachers or with a Head of any school, who might have been helpful but were not so open. Notably, most of the in-depth information that I elicited from informal discussions or taped interviews came from subjects with whom more rapport was established. Another point is that some sampling occurred unwittingly or unexpectedly (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). For example, teacher A (grade 5) at school C encouraged me to stay in his classroom for more than one week; I gladly accepted this, because it could give me further insights into the daily life of a classroom.

Distinguishing between deliberate sampling and sampling that was determined in the course of the fieldwork is a serious issue, because the sites and subjects which are explored influence the data collection and analysis, and the researcher should be aware of this (Ball, 1990). Towards this end, I was trying, in the field, to ask myself what I would like to explore further and to pursue doing so, as well as welcoming any unexpected sampling and information that was relevant.

Some sampling occurred during the data analysis too; as mentioned later, from my field experience, I selected, compressed and combined some texts for the presentation of each case study, as being more relevant and illuminating.

**Data Sources**

A range of data sources was used: informal discussions, taped interviews, group discussions, observation, school documents and children's writing, as well as questionnaires. It was thought that the use of multiple methods would capture a wealth of data, also allowing triangulation (Stake, 1995). A wide range of data was considered to be necessary for exploring such a broad area as moral, social and citizenship education within the ethos and the curriculum of the school. The subjects that provided information were students, teachers, and, to some extent, other employees (e.g. schoolkeepers), and parents. Interaction with them included mainly informal discussions, where subjects appeared to be more expressive and authentic than in interviews, especially when more rapport was developed. Data collection was an on-going process that was built upon earlier steps; the above data sources were frequently used to explore points that emerged from previous ones. In this way, progressive focusing occurred, while 'a chain of evidence', as suggested by Yin (1994), was gradually being shaped.

**Data Collection Process**

As shown in the following table, which presents the timing of the fieldwork, I spent a period of three to six weeks in each school.

Table 4. Timing of the fieldwork

| School A (religious private) | School B (state lower-class) | School C (state upper-class) | School D (state middle-class) | School E (state rural school, mixture of classes) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 May – 18 June 1999 | 5 October – 10 November 1999 | 11 November – 23 December 1999 | 31 January – 10 March 2000 | 13 – 31 March 2000 |

The extent of my stay at each school was not the same, due to factors such as the availability of the subjects involved to contribute to my research, or the school size (e.g. school E had thirty-five

pupils, whereas school A had about four hundred). My contact with the schools was not limited to the weeks when I stayed there; when I was at some school other than the first or the last one, I often visited some of the previous schools, especially when some teachers invited me, mostly for a celebration (e.g. Christmas) or a specific activity (e.g. a museum visit). Moreover, my entrance in, and exit from, each school, was more gradual than the table shows; for example, in the last week of going to school B, I visited school C twice. I did so to make both entrance and exit less awkward.

In the next paragraphs, I describe the research methods I employed: these were observation, interviews and informal discussions, document analysis, and questionnaires.

*-Observation:*

In each school, I tried to observe aspects of moral, social and citizenship education within the curriculum and the ethos. My observation was non-structured, and open-ended – I did not use any checklists. My degree of participation varied depending on the circumstances.

With regard to the taught curriculum, I observed classes in the subjects of RE and SCE (at grades 4, 5 and 6), as well as some other subjects (e.g. Greek or History). In all five schools, I attempted to observe as many lessons with different teachers as possible, so as to learn more about the ethos of the whole school and of separate classrooms. While observing classes, I tried to establish a non-participant status in order to avoid affecting the scene; this was difficult due to my prolonged stay in the field, particularly when children grew more familiar with me. I tried to minimise my presence by being seated at a distance, in a back corner of the classroom, and, like King (1978), when I was talked to, I smiled politely, and most importantly, I avoided eye contact: if you do not look, you are not seen. I took notes in pencil of what I heard and saw, in a small notebook, on a continuous basis; my notes were cursory and supplemented shortly afterwards with fuller accounts. Sometimes, I recorded parts of what I listened to in a small tape-recorder that was in my bag; I informed teachers about this. My attention was mostly oriented to the dialogues that occurred, and the contents and methods of teaching, as well as any aspects related to the ethos of the classroom or school, such as the pedagogy, and the teacher-pupil or pupil-pupil relationships. I focused on these issues when observing classes other than RE and SCE, while I was also interested in seeing if and how issues of moral and socio-political relevance were raised and treated.

With regard to extra-curricular activities, I observed the morning prayer, the pupils' attendance at Church service, school celebrations (e.g. national or seasonal), as well as school visits and trips. In these cases, my role was commonly that of a participant observer. Notes were written down shortly after the observations or in intervals between them.

To examine more implicit aspects of school life, I had to immerse myself in it. To learn about children's values, relationships and behaviour, I daily observed them playing and talking,

being often a participant myself, during breaktime. To learn about teachers' behaviour, values and interests, I stayed in the staffroom for around one or two hours daily, commonly talking with them. Notes were not taken during this time, so as not to embarrass them, but were written up immediately afterwards.

As suggested by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), many of the notes were in the form of jottings taken in the course of observed action, that were soon complemented by hasty notes in private places (e.g. the washroom or in a quiet corner); some of these brief notes have been very valuable.

*-Interviews and Informal Discussions:*

Discussions were initially open-ended in order to detect and approach issues; later, they became more focused, to generate understanding and deeper insights (Simons, 1995). Many data were yielded through informal, non-arranged discussions in the course of my daily contact with subjects in the playground, the staffroom, the corridors, and during extra-curricular activities, as well on the bus to and from each school. Within these interactions, I asked for comments on my concerns; however, at the same time, I obtained much information in an unplanned, unexpected way, within daily situations. The more I immersed myself in the context, the more I was learning from unsolicited accounts (see Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). At that time, it is unlikely that the informants were aware of their role, despite knowing my interest in the school life. I took notes soon after, and not during, these interactions, because I did not want to spoil a natural, friendly climate and the data collection itself; the ethical problems are discussed later.

I also conducted a number of semi-structured, tape-recorded interviews with teachers in each school; I had prepared my questions to some extent, but I also sought to be flexible and open to new impressions. I conducted these interviews towards the end of my stay at each school, when more rapport had been established, and I was increasingly immersed in the field, recognising what to focus on. I prepared these interviews after conducting some data collection and analysis, and when I needed further insights. To elicit them, I could often introduce explicit cues and direct the discussion where I wanted; this form of interview has been characterised as 'focused' (see Merton & Kendall, 1946). What was good about interviewing subjects like this was that I was familiar with the context, and I could use the discussion time more effectively (see Nisbet & Watt, 1984).

Beyond informal discussions and focused interviews, I elicited many data from answers to short questions I asked 'on the spot'. For example, to understand what I had just observed or heard, I would ask for further information. My questions would refer to particular events and were rarely abstract; I did not often ask, for example, 'what are your values when teaching SCE?', but I might ask 'why did you say this when teaching SCE?'

I knew that the validity of the data from the above interviews, informal discussions and questions largely depended on the extent to which I created the conditions where the subjects would say what they meant, mean what they said, say what they thought and think about what they said (MacDonald & Sanger, 1982). I pursued this within my efforts to establish rapport, as described previously. I also think that the sensitivity of the issues under study, as well as my taking a learning and non-evaluative stance, built up interactions that had little formality or sense of hierarchy between me and respondents (Ball, 1984). I found that most teachers were talkative and interested in the discussions which we had. I related this to the fact that most teachers, due to the intensity of their work, become isolated in their school realities and have little time to reflect on and discuss them (Fullan, 1991; Wasley, 1991), including their moral and social aspects. In the course of our interaction, some teachers asked for my own views, which I expressed only occasionally, to avoid influencing them; what I also did was to express others' viewpoints, or my viewpoints as if they were those of others, so as to take the discussion further. As for the pupils, they were commonly comfortable and friendly with me and very interested in talking about their school life and subjects. Bearing in mind that students could exaggerate in their comments, I tried to triangulate the latter with information from my own observations, as well from teachers' comments.

As to comparing between note-taken accounts of informal discussions and transcripts of recorded interviews, the former had the advantage of unobtrusiveness and economy of effort but suffered from distortions that stemmed from hidden, reflexive acts of interpretation and analysis while selecting which of the offered information to record (MacDonald & Sanger, 1982).

*-Document analysis:*

At the private school, school documents such as the school prospectus or the school regulations, were collected and analysed as providing indications for the ethos of the school, as well as impetus for further questions. In the state schools, there were no such documents, and only a few others, such as leaflets from teachers' unions or invitations to parents for school celebrations. In all five schools, the analysis of documents that was most contributory to the study was that of children's writing on how they felt about their school, teachers and classes. Children wrote these under my supervision, after I asked for their sincerity and assured them of confidentiality. Some follow-up private and group discussions with the children were accordingly illuminating.

*-Questionnaire:*

To explore the attitudes of children to the timetabled subjects of moral, social and citizenship education - the subjects of RE and SCE in this case - a questionnaire was used (see Appendix). Questionnaires are considered to be useful for eliciting the views of a larger number of respondents (Cohen et al., 2000), as well as for comparing different schools and teachers (Simons,

1995). To limit the focus and to combine the questionnaire findings with observational data, only sixth grade students completed it, except in the case of school E, where the fifth grade students also completed it, as grade 6 had only seven students. The questionnaire consisted of a semantic differential scale and open-ended questions, which sought to explore children's ideas about their school subjects (e.g. which subjects are more interesting and important) and about the school's contribution to their lives. In the rating scale, both the selection and the wording of the questions were largely based on my MA dissertation (Pasoula, 1998), which sought to investigate the place of the subjects of RE and SCE in the sixth grade of Athens primary schools. To minimise problems, I piloted the questionnaire, before the first case study, in a grade 6 class of nineteen pupils in an Athens state school; minor wording changes were then made. During the research, pupils completed the questionnaire in school time, under my guidance, without teachers' interference. In schools B and C, where I stayed in the autumn term, I went back to distribute the questionnaire after Christmas, when children had formed a more stable idea about their subjects. Some follow-up discussions with some pupils and teachers occurred after I had studied pupils' responses.

I used the above methods in conjunction with each other, so as to elicit more data, to allow triangulation, and to increase validity. To give a detailed picture of how I gathered data in each site, I compiled the following table.

Table 5. Data Sources

| | Interviews | Questionnaires | School Documents (number) | Students' writing | Observations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School A (fourteen teachers, around four hundred students) | Daily written recorded discussions with teachers, pupils and parents;<br>Three transcribed interviews (teachers E, R and A) | 62 (31+31) questionnaires (grade 6) | (8) | 26 essays (grade 2): ''what the school offers to me';<br>25 essays (grade 3): 'my teacher';<br>25 essays (grade 3): 'my school';<br>27 essays (grade 4): 'what the school offers to me';<br>29 essays (grade 4): 'what the school offers to me'. | Morning prayer and assembly;<br>Breaktime;<br>RE and SCE classes (grades 4, 5 and 6);<br>Other classes;<br>Church going;<br>Two school trips;<br>Celebration for the end of the school year. |
| School B (twelve teachers, around two hundred twenty students) | Daily written recorded discussions with teachers, pupils and parents;<br>Four transcribed interviews | 29 (14+15) questionnaires (grade 6) | (6) | 16 essays (grade 4): 'my teacher';<br>16 essays (grade 4): 'what Christmas means to me'. | Morning prayer;<br>Breaktime;<br>RE and SCE classes (grades 4, 5 and 6);<br>Other classes;<br>Church going;<br>School trip;<br>Museum visit;<br>Teachers' lunch |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (teachers A, H, Y and D) | | | | party; Halloween party (for parents, children and teachers); National celebration; Teachers'-Parents' union meeting; Parents' meeting (classes of teachers H and D). |
| School C (six teachers, one hundred eighty students) | Daily written recorded discussions with teachers and pupils; One transcribed interview (teacher E) | 28 questionnaires (grade 6) | (3) | 30 essays (grade 2): 'my teacher'; 30 essays (grade 2): 'what Christmas means to me'; 30 paragraphs (grade 5): 'what the school offers to me' 25 essays (grade 5): 'what Christmas means to me'. | Morning prayer; Breaktime; RE and SCE classes (grades 4, 5 and 6); Other classes; Church going (3); School celebration; Christmas celebration. |
| School D (six teachers, around one hundred students) | Daily written recorded discussions with teachers and pupils; One transcribed interview (teacher V) | 20 questionnaires (grade 6) | (6) | 16 essays (grade 4): 'what the school offers to me'; 16 essays (grade 4): 'what subjects I find more interesting'; 12 essays (grade 5): 'what the school offers to me'; 20 paragraphs (grade 6) on RE. | Morning prayer; Breaktime; RE and SCE classes (grades 4, 5 and 6); Other classes; |
| School E (four teachers, thirty five students) | Daily written recorded discussions with teachers, the school advisor, pupils and parents; Two transcribed interviews (teachers D and T) | 16 (7+9) questionnaires (grades 6 and 5 respectively) | (2) | 7 essays (grade 5): 'what the school offers to me' 7 essays (grade 6): 'what the school offers to me'. | Morning prayer; Breaktime; RE and SCE classes (grades 4, 5 and 6); Other classes; National celebration; school trip |

**Data Analysis**

A separate section is devoted to data analysis, though, as indicated by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), data analysis is not a distinct stage of research; it begins before fieldwork (when research problems are formulated), it takes shape in analytic notes, and is embodied in the researcher's ideas and decisions about sites, subjects and themes to be investigated. It also occurs throughout fieldwork, especially while re-reading the fieldnotes, reflecting on them, and asking

further questions. Thus, to one degree or another, data analysis feeds into research design and data collection. For analytical reasons, I identified the phases of my data analysis as follows.

The initial phase involved the exploration of the relevant literature, the formulation of research questions and the selection of the methodological approaches, research sites, data sources and data collection procedures.

The next phase involved the compilation of the evidence collected – documents, fieldnotes, interview transcripts, pupils' writings and questionnaires - into the 'database' of each case study (Yin, 1994). I first arranged the fieldnotes under dates; then I started, commonly on the same day of collecting the data, to organise my notes under major categories, such as 'parents'-teachers' relationships' or 'classroom discipline' or 'religious activities'. An ongoing re-organising and coding of the data occurred, while more specific categories started to emerge later (e.g. 'respect' in teacher-pupils' relationships), though I did not yet elaborate on them. Comments, questions and thoughts were also added to my notes, commonly in discrete forms (e.g. underlined). Within these notes I often integrated later, when relevant, some parts of the interview transcripts and of the children's writings and answers to open-ended questionnaire items. I should note that not all the interviews or the incidents which I recorded were fully transcribed; after carefully listening to them more than once, I took some notes and transcribed only the parts that I most needed. Generally, I felt that while proceeding from the first case study to the later ones, I became more perceptive and selective over what data I needed to enter, at home, into my computer, or in the field, into my notebook. The more research I did, the more easily I could understand what information was more relevant and necessary.

The next phase concerned the iterative reading and rewriting of each database, while more comments and thoughts were added. Some recurring issues, themes and sub-themes, which I had already considered while staying in the field and compiling the databases, also became more vivid. I started organising my data more systematically into data subsets, while also trying to explore, understand and establish relationships among them; data reduction occurred at the same time. I was also interested in illustrating 'discrepant cases', which I considered not as exceptional but as cases that showed the diversity within each school (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993); for example, I explored, under teacher-pupil relationships, different cases of classroom teachers. At the end, I did not compose only a simple description of each case; I often tried, though not using references to previous studies, to move from description to inference, by positing some explanations. Chapters five, six, seven, eight and nine of the thesis, present the five case studies that I conducted in schools A, B, C, D and E respectively. These chapters are organised around issues that emerged as important for both the topic under study and each specific case.

The next phase involved reading and studying each case again, and I identified, and compared, emergent and important issues across cases. This helped me to understand and describe each case better, as well as to reach comparisons and theoretical considerations. At this stage, I went back to the literature in the field. In the next and final phase, the analysis within each case and across cases was completed.

The above phases are not completely discrete and did not follow a strict linear sequence; for example, considering the relevant literature occurred not only at the outset of the study, but also during and after the fieldwork, helping me stand more critically towards my field experiences.

**Data Coding**

While collecting, writing, rewriting and analysing data, data sources were always noted down. When categories started to emerge, data were coded to bring together the relevant information and to determine the frequency of occurrence, or the interrelationship, of some issues. Some substantive themes for moral, social and citizenship education, such as student participation, were common for all five schools - some of them were also pinpointed by the relevant literature. Some other themes were more particular to some cases; for example, the impact of religion on students' behaviour emerged as an important theme in School A, which had some distinctive religious features, while some indications of such impact also emerged in schools C and E. The individual sources are described either in parentheses or within the text. For teachers, false initials have been given, whereas the first names of pupils have been replaced by pseudonyms. The methods with which information was yielded are described within the text in various ways (e.g. 'while observing RE classes'; 'students, in their questionnaire responses, wrote...'). In these ways, there is clarity about where data came from.

The next section discusses some serious methodological issues, such as validity.

## SOME METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Qualitative enquiry concerns the recording of perceptual information and perceptual analysis of it; that is why it is criticised for being very subjective (Robson, 1993). Case studies, in particular, involve selection at every stage: choosing cases to study, sampling persons and instances within the cases, and finally editing data (Walker, 1980). At the same time, research should move towards objectivity. The issues of validity and reliability relate to the minimization of bias and the quality of the data; relevant issues are the constraints and ethics of research.

**Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which research measures or methods are correct and appropriate for the issues under study (Kirk and Miller, 1986). The following circumstances and procedures contributed to validity.

To guard against using methods that were weak or inappropriate to the themes under study, I employed a variety of methods – interviews, observation, document analysis and questionnaire. I also tried to include a range of data sources (persons, documents, and places) so as to acquire as many perspectives on issues as possible (Simons, 1995; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thus, triangulation concerned both multiple data collection methods and data sources. I knew that gaining access to a setting by no means guarantees access to all informants and data available there (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995); thus, I attempted to investigate as many parts of the setting as possible. While seeking to triangulate, I did not simply aim to clarify and verify meanings and perceptions; I also wanted to get alternative viewpoints (Flick, 1992). Although few writers have commented on this, differences between sets, or sources, of data, may be very important and illuminating (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). I thought that such differences were crucial while investigating values, behaviours, and school ethos, where contradictions are not uncommon. Thus, I tried to make triangulation central to my research, and gradually build it into my data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Consistency of approach within the five different research settings was protected by the guidance of the research questions and the relevant literature, which identified issues to be investigated in all cases, while also increasing the comparability of the data. Consistency was also fostered by employing similar methods for data collection and analysis (Simons, 1995).

While collecting data, particularly by observation, I tried to minimise bias by recording, as much as possible, on a continuous rather that on a selective basis. While proceeding with the fieldwork, I became more skilled at discerning what was more relevant or not, and thus, I generally recorded less information. However, while observing certain sessions, such as RE classes, I still tried to record as much as possible. To reduce the possibility of forgetting about, and misinterpreting, what I observed or heard, I tried to take notes as soon as possible after witnessing something; to do so, I often sought privacy in different places (such as playground corners or even the washroom). Moreover, to avoid misinterpretations of the data collected, I entered my notes, most of the time, fully or partly, into Word files every evening or afternoon after coming back from school, when memory was stronger and trustworthier.

The validity of data from interviews increases when the informants are asked to check the interview transcripts (Simons, 1995). In this study, not many interviews were taped; many, and

valuable, data was yielded through informal discussions and unsolicited accounts. Their occurrence within daily natural settings, often with minimal or no prompts by me, increases their validity as compared to data collected in official, formal settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Miles & Huberman, 1994). As to the interview transcripts I had, having them checked by interviewees was, as also reported by Walker (1986), a validation procedure with problems: teachers were not willing to check the transcripts; they seemed to trust me and/or to lack time to do so. Importantly, I did not ask them persistently, because many of their most illuminating comments were made during informal, non-planned discussions. To overcome the limitations that the non-checking of the discussion notes and the interview transcripts caused, I followed three procedures. One is that I often asked teachers to discuss some points that they made, as well as my interpretations of them. Another is that I triangulated the data which they had offered with other teachers' comments, which offered some informal validation (Ball, 1984). Another is that I often attempted to validate the information they offered by observing their practices. As for teachers validating my observation notes, this sometimes occurred contrary to my will, as some teachers often asked to see my notes, or unexpectedly tried, in my presence, to read from my notebook.

Another validation procedure is to have the draft report reviewed by some informants who could corroborate the facts and evidence included in the study - and not necessarily the researcher's interpretations (Yin, 1994). I decided not to follow this procedure, partly because most informants were unwilling to interfere more in the study, and partly because students' moral and social development at school is a very sensitive area, and the meanings that the researcher assigns to the data may seem unpleasant to the informants. This applies generally to qualitative studies, while there is also a suggestion that the sharing of control of the data with participants means that some of the finest data can be diluted or lost (ibid; Walker, 1980). I thought that this does not necessarily happen; thus, I often attempted to discuss my perceptions and interpretations of the data with my informants in the field, and this fed valuably into my thinking. Moreover, as I sustained contact with teachers at schools B and D till autumn 2000, I was able to continue to discuss some of my findings and interpretations.

To allow data to speak for themselves, I often cited quotations from informal discussions, interviews, documents and children's writings, rather than reporting them interpretatively.

**Reliability**

Reliability refers to consistency in procedures and findings, that is the extent to which the research procedures yield the same answers however and whenever they are carried out (Kirk and Miller, 1986). It should be noted that the canons for reliability in quantitative research do not work

in qualitative research, because the former assumes the possibility of replication, while the latter acknowledges the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). It is impossible for a researcher to replicate exactly what a colleague has done in qualitative research that depends largely on the relationships established between researcher and participants; interpersonal relationships are never the same. However, as noted by Cohen and colleagues (2000), this does not mean that qualitative research should not strive for replication in generating, comparing and validating constructs. The goal of reliability, to minimise errors and bias, is very important. Even if it may not be fully practicable, the extent to which it can occur should be considered. It is worth noting Ball's (1990) point that ethnographic fieldwork conducted by different researchers would turn out differently in the sense that there are differences in emphasis and orientation, *rather than* in the story to be told; at least, that is what should be the case. Towards this end, researchers should make explicit their assumptions and interpretations; this is what I consistently tried to do when writing the chapters that present the five case studies, and those that discuss the findings.

Finally, reliability is not so much a matter of the possibility of replication as of investigating one's *own* experience and situation - in so far as one is in a situation relevant to the explored one – and arriving at similar results through using similar techniques. In a technical sense, reliability is pursued by careful, detailed and explicit documentation of the procedures followed and the development of a case study database (Yin, 1994); in the present study, efforts have been made to do both (also see table 5). As to Yin's suggestion, to conduct research 'as if someone were always looking over your shoulder' (ibid: 37), this is something that can be often forgotten while immersing oneself in the school context.

**Constraints of the study**

> 'Many a researcher would like to tell the whole story but of course cannot; the whole story exceeds anyone's knowing, anyone's telling' (Stake, 1994: 240).

In this study, time has been a major constraint, also given that it was the work of a single research student. Limited time was spent at each school, especially if one considers the depth and complexity of the issues studied and the number of persons directly or indirectly involved (students or parents). The study lacks the richness, depth and validity of longer-term, fuller-scale ethnographies (see, for example, Ball, 1981; D. Hargreaves, 1967; King, 1978). More time would have allowed further exploration of the views and situations recorded, and deeper insights into reality and its details. Jackson and colleagues (1993) suggested, in their project 'Moral Life of Schools', that every detail of school life, from the interior of the principal's office to the way that the school's canteen operates, can be examined with an eye to moral significance. Though efforts

have been made to explore such details, the limited time was a serious obstacle to doing so. The time restrictions also limited the set of the cases I studied; 'unusual' cases (such as that of a very expensive private school), or other 'sensitive' cases[1] (such as that of a multi-racial inner-city school), which could all be interesting, were left out of the study.

The range and variety of data were distorted by the fact that, like Ball (1984), I was more familiar with some friendlier teachers who became more central to my research than with their less friendly colleagues. It is easy to stay where life is more comfortable, with people one gets along with; thus, the view of the school is coloured and limited by the network which the researcher inhabits (ibid). I often felt the need to push myself to move from the friendlier corners of the staffroom to the less friendly ones, but this had its difficulties. The organisation of the staffroom was not irrelevant; for example, School A was the only school where teachers did not sit in the staffroom in a circle, or around one big table, but in groups, as was encouraged by the organisation of the tables. There, I tended to sit and interact with teachers I was more familiar with, whereas in the other schools this happened to a lesser extent. Generally, approaching more frequently and more successfully the more distant teachers would have yielded more data and possibly more 'negative' pictures; possibly, that is a reason why these teachers appeared to be distant. Overall, the work would be a more adequate contribution to knowledge of the schools involved, if all teachers and classrooms in each school had been studied.

Another constraint has to do with the dimension of time; the different moments and periods of school life have contextual and situational effects on what happens at school. For example, discipline expectations for Monday morning and Friday afternoons are different, while periods such as Christmas or the end of the school year involve different extra-curricular activities and emotions. Different timing not only affects the school events, but also gives a special, as well as limited, significance to data. (Ball, 1990). Though I tried to visit the schools which I studied at additional times, apart from the weeks I spent there, practical reasons often hindered this; it happened to a limited extent only, and not equally for each school.

Constraints also derive from a number of validity issues. For example, as regards my collecting data through informal conversations (such as staffroom talk), rather than relying on interviews, so as to minimize my own effects on the data, such effects might be still present in the informal conversations I observed, or participated in (Hammersley, 1984). Particularly as regards data offered by students, further distortions should be envisaged, because, despite the rapport which I established, my being an adult and a teacher placed me in a team whose power relationship to pupils is not equal (Ball, 1985). Another issue is that the validity of the case study reports which I

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[1] For 'types' of sampling cases see Patton (1980).

composed would be higher if respondent validation had occurred to a greater extent and if the reports had been reviewed.

Research was conducted in Greek schools, and dialogues were in Greek, which meant that many data had to be translated from Greek into English, though many of my fieldnotes were taken in English. The translation was done by me, and not by an experienced translator, detached from the research; accurate translation was not easy, especially in the case of idiomatic expressions.

Another constraint concerns the problem of charting the 'multiple realities', namely the variant conceptions of the subjects under study, who are different persons with different backgrounds. To take the example of a classroom, the researcher has to examine the multiple realities of the teachers, students and texts involved (King, 1978). At the same time, it is the researcher's reality, values and assumptions that come between him/her and the other realities. It has been sometimes suggested that researchers should suspend their own reality to transfer to, and investigate, the subjects' reality (Cohen et al., 2000); however, as explained by Ball (1990) and Hammersley (1998), what we see is filtered by what we are. This diversity and complexity can seriously increase in research on moral values and behaviour, given their frequently implicit and complex nature.

**Ethics**

Ethical issues arise whenever people interact. There exists the established principle of respect for people, which means treating them as 'ends' and not as 'means', for example, not using them for one's research interest, without respecting their privacy (Bassey, 1999).

Informed consent is a fundamental ethical issue. Although I let the informants know about my research, it is questionable whether subjects know what they become involved in when they give their 'informed consent' to research (Burgess, 1989). One reason for this is their possible naivety, which is not thought to be uncommon (Ball, 1984). Another reason is that researchers, including me, choose not to say everything. As discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) on ethnographic research, there are various reasons for not doing so. One is that, when starting with the fieldwork, the researcher often does not know how the work will progress, at least in detail. Later, when the research issues are further clarified, limited information is again provided to participants, partly because these may not be very interested in the research, and partly because information may affect people's behaviour in ways that could produce false results. I also agree, to some extent, with Mitchell's (1993) suggestion that full informed consent may hinder access to some areas of research, while some secrecy helps the researcher to observe subjects behaving in less controllable and predictable ways. To give an example from my research, if teachers knew my great interest in

modes of discipline and control, they might behave in a less authoritarian way in front of me. I do not think that my not telling everything made my research covert; moreover, I did give additional and realistic explanations to those teachers who asked for them, though it is true that these teachers were few. With regard to students, seeking their informed consent raises particular ethical problems. Students cannot choose, within the school authority structures, to say 'no' to the adult researcher (Simons, 1989), and I was also a teacher. Moreover, my explanations that I investigated their ideas about their school life and the curriculum did not mean that children could understand my research. As for parental permission, headteachers and teachers did not think it necessary, because permission from the Ministry was granted.

Familiarisation and personal involvement meant that many data were increasingly yielded in natural, unexpected, and 'hidden' ways. As noted previously, valuable data were gathered through my observing, and participating in, non-planned, informal discussions, and daily school incidents. Teachers gave me the impression that they did not suspect that, when all these happened, I was also doing research. The naivety that frequently characterises participants in research partly accounted for that. It was also important that teachers, as many of them said, 'got used to having [me] at school everyday'; thus, they did not feel as if they were being researched by me; I also had a friendly rather than a researcher's attitude. As for the students, they did not seem to understand either that they offered me data through our daily interaction.

As for data collection by using a tape-recorder, I had a small one in my bag, and teachers knew about it. Sometimes I felt the need to use it without letting the teachers know in advance; for example, when a teacher suspended a lesson to settle a fight among children, I recorded the dialogues because they occurred quickly and I was afraid that my notes would miss some points that could be important. Later, I informed teachers of my recording, and it never occurred that they did not want me to use the data; on the contrary, they suggested that the tape was good quality data, and they sometimes wanted to have a copy.

Another ethical issue has to do with the fact that, during observation, I often sought to stay detached to avoid influencing what occurred; this was complex to do in cases that were intense in emotions, for example, when the Head of school A would hit undisciplined students.

A final ethical problem particular to case study research is the portrayal of persons and institutions in forms that are subject to the possibility of recognition (Stenhouse, 1988). I assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality, and the names of the schools, teachers and pupils were not reported in any case.

The consideration of ethics closes the discussion of methodology. The next five chapters present the five case studies that I conducted at schools A, B, C, D and E. The data are organised in

sections, which, as suggested by the literature and my field experience, are central to the topic under study; these sections are similar for each case study and concern: the context of the school, the relationships that were formed there, the modes of discipline, the extra-curricular activities, the role of religion, and the role of politics. Each of these sections is organised into themes; for example, relationships embrace teacher-pupil, pupil-pupil, and teacher-parent relationships. These themes are often analysed into sub-themes, depending on the data that I gathered in each school site; for example, within pupil-pupil relationships, I distinguished the themes of racism, competitiveness or aggressiveness in some schools. These data subsets should not be taken as a definite list of separate, static items; as also indicated in the next five chapters, they are inextricably interrelated, as the social system of a school is a unity that cannot be broken into segments. Presenting the data under themes and sub-themes serves organisational, analytical and descriptive purposes.

# CHAPTER FIVE
# SCHOOL A

This chapter presents the findings of the first case study, which I conducted in an Athens private school with some distinctive religious features. While exploring the curriculum and the school ethos as related to moral, social and citizenship education, I particularly sought to investigate the relationship of the school's religious messages to children's moral and social development.

## THE CONTEXT

### The School

> 'Our playground is very big. There are benches, basketball and volleyball courts... Around it there are trees and a little forest' (Elena, grade 4).

The school was founded by a religious organisation, and was stated to be 'non-profit-making' (School Advertisement). Teachers said that the school was cheaper than other private schools, drawing children not only from affluent families; they also said that around twenty percent of the students came from families that had 'some religious principles'. The school had about four hundred pupils, organised in classrooms of around thirty.

### School Aims

The school aims, as stated in the School Regulations, are identical with the official aims of Greek Primary and Secondary Education (law 1566/1985), which explicitly address the moral, social and religious aspects of education. As teacher E noted:

> 'The aim of the school is the same as the aim of primary education by law... This is *not* a religious school; it just aims at moral and religious values. It is not anything different, the school just works consciously on areas that may be neglected by other schools... maybe due to lack of time...'

Nonetheless, many children expressed, when writing for me about their school, a different idea:

> 'My school is religious. It aims to teach me a lot, such a lot about Christ' (Manolis, grade 4).
> '...at school you learn Jesus' story, Maths, Greek, writing,...' (Nikos, grade 2).

As discussed in chapter two, religion may contribute to moral and social development, but this is not always the case. To investigate this in the context of this school, the religious features of the school are examined.

## RELIGION

Religious messages at school were offered through *religious activities* and the *subject of RE. Teachers' relation to religion* played an important role in shaping both the school's religious messages and the *attitudes of students* towards these messages.

### Religious Activities

The religious activities were not more than those established by the relevant law (1566/1985), that is, *school prayers* and *church attendance*.

#### *School Prayers*

> 'Each morning when the bell rings, we line up and say our prayers; just before the bell rings to end school, we say our prayers again' (Panos, grade 4).
> 'The Headteacher says: 'you should love each other'' (Manolis, grade 4).

According to my observations, each morning, children lined up to pray and sing hymns all together, in the presence of all the teachers and the Head. Once or twice a week, the Head talked to the children about a saint or religious event celebrated at that time, or a story with a moral message; sometimes, she raised matters of discipline. My observations and teachers' comments suggested that pupils, including the less disciplined ones, appeared to be very quiet and respectful at morning prayer. I did not think that this always meant respect towards religion, because I occasionally saw some children being noisy at the prayer time their classrooms at the end of the school day.

#### *Attendance at Church*

Attendance at church was displayed in the school prospectus as one of the school activities. My attendance at a school church service, as well as teachers' comments, suggested that pupils were very quiet at church, though not necessarily concentrating in the service, possibly because the Greek Church Service is in Ancient Greek, which is not taught at primary schools. Many pupils in grades 5 and 6 participated in the service by singing in the choir. Church going appeared to be too frequent for some children, who told me: 'we need to go to Church for celebrations, or once a month, not twice'; 'they take us there so often'. It is possible that these children were not very interested in religion or its rituals; it is also possible that the amount of religious activities organized by the school was excessive for some children. A group of grade 6 children complained to me that they sang too much, which exhausted them and made them dislike singing. Teacher K explained to me children's limited involvement with reference to their 'superficiality' and 'the spirit of the time', which means 'not going in depth into anything'. Whether it is because the children and the social context are superficial or because the school heavily emphasised religious rituals, it appeared that

children often felt pressurised to attend them or did so without being involved or interested. It is of relevance to examine teachers' own relationship to religion.

**Teachers and Religion**

The religious foundations and features of the school suggested that teachers who worked there were likely to share these values, as was also shown in their comments:

> 'The most important thing is not to forget that everything you do happens before Him. If you forget about it and you think that you alone can save a student or a class, you deceive yourself.' (teacher M)
> 'Do you feel anxious about the children's progress? If you pray, Jesus comes into your classroom. You do what you can; beyond that, you can only pray' (teacher R).

The following statement particularly shows how the teacher's religious values can, or should, influence teachers and their relationship to pupils:

> 'If you see children as God's creatures, as souls, as persons created in the image of and after the likeness of God, as people for whom Jesus came on earth... this is the ideal thing; you live it when you are in the appropriate mood. You cannot think of it every time that a child makes an annoying noise while you are trying to explain fractions, but you need to have such thoughts in order to realise that children are not vessels to fill with knowledge but human beings. To do this, you should have a 'spiritual life'; though you can say that you are not a saint, you can improve' (teacher R).

Such thinking emphasises *respect* for the person of the pupil. Overall, views like the above indicate how the religious beliefs and values of teachers can influence their thinking and their work. A relevant issue is how, and to which extent, teachers express their religious faith. Teacher E noted:

> 'When you make many religious points, it is certainly heavy for children... They learn more when the teacher does not say a lot, for example, on loving each other, but inspires an atmosphere of love, and children feel it. When they hear a lot, they learn a little.'

This view, which more teachers articulated, implies that authentic practice rather than preaching is the best way to familiarise pupils with the moral values of Christianity. It seems that emphasis on talking about religion can be tiresome, as happens with emphasis on religious practices (as shown above in the case of church attendance).

**Students and Religion**

Students' attitudes to the school's religious messages were *diverse*. The impact that these messages could have on children's thinking and behaviour is discussed below with reference to some *individual children*, as well as to some *inconsistencies* in the behaviour of a greater number of them.

*Diversity*

Examination of children's writing on what the school offered to them indicates that the school's religious messages were often associated with religious contents, rituals and duties, rather than to moral behaviour:

> 'Miss teaches me about Christ, his birth, his Resurrection, the missionaries, the church, the prophets, the teacher-priests...' (Yiannis, grade 4)
> 'At school, I learn about Christ and to believe in Him. To say my prayers in the morning, to go to church on Sunday morning...' (Nikos, grade 4)

Alternatively, school's religious instruction could be related to children's more personal experiences of faith:

> 'What the school gives me is a word with God. I learn what prayer is' (Niki, grade 4).
> 'I learn, when I am in danger, to pray to God seeking help' (Dimitra, grade 4).

Children could also consider religious messages as impacting on inner life and human relationships:

> 'Friendship is something excellent. As Christ had said, you should love others, as much as I loved you' (Aris, grade 4).
> 'At school I learn to behave myself. Good behaviour helps to break the walls and enter heaven' (Kostas, grade 4).

All these different ways of conceptualising religion may relate not only to how religious messages are offered at school, but also to how they are perceived by different children, with different personal characteristics and family influences.

A further question is how the school's religious messages impacted on students' *behaviour*. To consider this, it is illuminating to mention cases of individual children as well as some inconsistencies that I noticed in the behaviour of a greater number of pupils.

*Individual children*

Information about the cases of two boys, Themis and Yiannis, is offered.

-*Themis*:

When teacher A (grade 4) asked her pupils to write an essay on 'the person they admire most', Themis was the only one who chose Jesus:

> 'A person that I admire and love best is holier than the holy people. To let you know who it is, it is Christ. It is this poor guy who was living by himself. His only company was his disciples and his mother, whose name was Mary. Christ was a God, but a kind-hearted God, who helped the sick, the blind and even did miracles. Christ accepted to be crucified so that we will be free now. He was beautiful but the evil never harmed him. After his resurrection, he stayed three days in the grave and then he was risen. He went to Hell and broke its gates and set free half of the people there because the other half did not want to become free. All would like to become like him, but, most of all, me.'

This boy was said, by his mother and teacher, to 'go unnoticed'; his mother told me that his teacher and I were the only persons who have ever commented positively on her son, who typically

neglected his homework. At classes, I could see him playing quietly with aeroplanes he made by himself. His teacher told me that only religion seemed to touch this child, who was greatly enjoying RE classes; I was interested to hear by his mother that she did not talk to him about religion, and that they went to church only occasionally. As for his behaviour, at breaktime I never saw him arguing with anyone. His teacher told me:

> 'At the beginning, kids mocked and avoided Themis because he had got very dirty once. However, he never grew wild or complained to anyone or me. He suffered patiently and was gradually integrated into the group; now, he is much liked.'

Possibly, religion touched upon this boy's behaviour and spiritual life. The case of another boy follows.

-*Yiannis*:

Teachers' discussions in the staffroom indicated that Yiannis was distinguished as one of the most 'difficult' children in the school. At breaktime, I observed him frequently fighting in the playground, using bad language, making rude gestures, and often looking angrily, while children did not seem to like him. An ex-teacher of his could recall his general behaviour, and his 'transformation' when it came to religion:

> 'Although he was very hard and aggressive, and generally indifferent to school – he thought it was a success of his to be so indifferent – in RE classes he was highly concentrated, becoming a different person. All the hardness of his face seemed to go away, he must have been very touched, some tranquillity and peace changed his expression. As to his essays, they all had a religious dimension' (teacher R).

His current teacher (teacher P) commented on this inconsistency:

> 'He is beyond any characterisation. He is sensitive in paradoxical ways; you don't know what to do with him.'

As generally regards 'difficult' children and their relationship to religion, teacher A offered an explanation:

> 'The children who are not very balanced can be highly touched by religion, because they find peace in it.'

A question is how lasting or deep this peace can be; however, it is important that it can exist, even for a little. The inconsistencies in Yiannis' behaviour provide a lead into discussing some inconsistencies I noted in the behaviour of a greater number of children.

***Inconsistencies***

Observing the morning prayer, I saw that some children who appeared, in the breaktime, to be among the most aggressive ones, looked very calm, respectful and pious, without appearing pretentious. Noticing this daily, I discussed it with teachers. A reason suggested by teacher G was that 'wild' children had simply got conditioned to being decent at prayer time:

> 'Especially if children have attended this school since grade 1, they get used to being quiet at some times, for example at prayer. It is not so much a matter of religious faith or behaviour as it is a matter of habit.'

Teacher A mentioned pupils' ability to distinguish different times:

> 'Children may swear at and hit other children while playing, because they get angry or lose control or imitate their classmates, but they possibly know how to behave at different times. Prayer time is a different time. Kids become used to staying quiet then.'

It can be argued that habit formation, and behaving appropriately in some circumstances only, are not very positive signs as regards moral or spiritual development. Teacher H drew a distinction:

> 'Behaving in religious ways is very different from having deep religious feelings.'

More lenient explanations were offered:

> 'It is the twofold nature of man, good and evil are inside us' (ex-student).

Teacher E, when interviewed, gave similar explanations, expanding on the influences of the circumstances:

> 'Aggressiveness does not mean that the child lacks the elements of tranquillity, respect and faith, which, depending on the climate formed, can be expressed, i.e. at prayer time. When the general climate is calm, the child expresses the good features within himself and all people'.

Apart from the influence of circumstances, inconsistencies can be expected in that there is a big difference between moral thinking and morally good behaviour, as was also discussed in chapter two. Petros (grade 4) captured this difficulty in his writing about the school's religious messages: 'Charity is the best thing in the world, and I have often felt it, without managing to put it into practice.' I should also note that aggressive children might behave even worse in the absence of any religious influences.

**RE Subject**

As prescribed by law (1566/1985) and the School Regulations, the RE curriculum and textbooks were the same as at state schools. The teaching of RE at this school is discussed with reference to its *status and popularity*, the *pedagogy* followed, and the teachers' *rationale*.

***Status and Popularity***

I initially thought that the religious foundations of the school would guarantee a high status for RE. However, in most classrooms I visited, RE was taught at the end of the day, and some of the time allocated to it was used for teaching other subjects. Some teachers also called the subject 'second-rate', probably influenced by the established view in Greek education, which distinguishes subjects between more and less important (Noutsos, 1979).

Most teachers said that pupils were fond of RE, regardless of their family's attitudes or the school's religious character. They suggested:

> 'Children have so many questions on religious matters; they have a religious thirst' (teacher K).
> 'The child is touched by whatever related to such truths, because he is created for them, this is Man's inclination... we are made for religious faith, our hearts need religion to find peace' (teacher A).

The last view indicates influence by personal religious faith. Another teacher (H) argued that attitudes to RE could be negative:

> 'It depends on the child. Vasilis' grandfather is a university teacher of Theology, but he is indifferent to anything related to RE.'

Good teaching was a generally accepted reason for children's liking RE:

> 'If you teach RE well, children become enthusiastic. It depends on how you give it to pupils' (teachers D & V).

A notable example was given for this:

> 'Saint John of Crostand was a teacher for a while; when he talked to students about Jesus' Resurrection, there was absolute silence because he wept for what had happened and the lesson was coming from his heart. Did he need to ask children to stay quiet?' (teacher R)

This view indicates that that the religious beliefs of the teacher can influence greatly the quality of the lesson, as teacher A also noted:

> 'It is essential that I believe in God myself; RE is my favourite teaching period. If a teacher doesn't have faith, what can he say in RE? It is not his fault, I excuse him completely.'

This point introduces the discussion of RE pedagogy.

### *Teaching Methods*

My observations and teachers' comments indicated that whole-class teaching was used extensively:

> 'It is like telling a narrative. I tell them, 'Children, we are gone, we are there'. That's why I demand absolute silence' (teacher A).

A pupil of teacher D (grade 3) said, when writing on her school, that monologue could be exciting:

> 'Our teacher tells the lesson so beautifully that all students listen to her carefully, having their hands folded' (Katerina).

This means passivity on the part of the children, and raises the need for discussion in RE classes. Some teachers also stressed this need. Teacher R told me that children 'could find the information written somewhere', and that 'the didactic elements of the stories should be negotiated'. Teacher A suggested that, as in most matters, children have formed ideas that should be articulated through discussion, so that building on them may occur. Teacher K found discussions important, because children could mention and explore their religious queries. However, my observations indicated that most teachers mainly used whole-class teaching. Probably, due to their religious commitment, they

sought to communicate to children religious values and information which they considered important. A girl offered information about RE pedagogy in her essay on what the school offers her:

> 'I journey through my deep feelings when our teacher tells us stories about Christ' (Violetta, pupil of teacher A).

Though it is important that children enjoy listening to their teacher, a problem is that they may take the teacher's words for more stories, which they do not examine critically. An introduction to the lesson like the following one by teacher V (grade 6) is not the best way towards promoting children's critical thinking:

> 'I know that you are tired. I will tell you a nice story and you will relax' [she then talked to them for twenty minutes about the life of a saint who was a robber before becoming a Christian].

On asking her, after observing this class, whether this would make children understand her lesson as only story-telling, she insisted that this would not occur because she showed children the sources (Church books). She explained:

> 'I present some 'scientific' elements. This is school, not Sunday school, though it includes some elements of inculcating religious faith into children.'

Possibly, that is why the tone of her voice, when I observed her lessons, did not seem to be preaching. However, not all teachers were like that, as is shown in the next section.

***Teachers' Rationale: Educating Christians?***

Some teachers explicitly sought to educate Christians. Teacher K (grade 6) told me what she intended when teaching RE:

> 'I don't care whether children will acquire knowledge on RE; they should know the basics only. I want children to feel Christ, be connected to Church and acquire some religious foundation. This is very important, especially at this age, when children need support. Society can be very unfriendly and children should not feel that they have no support.'

When I observed her classes, the questions she posed and the discussions she initiated were often accompanied by pieces of advice like that:

> -'Before we do something, we ask: would Christ do that? If no, I should not do it either. If yes, I should do it.'
> -'Christ is our mirror; he is the perfect model. I look at him, and if I make mistakes, I correct them.'
> -'I will not cheat in the exams. I believe that the Lord will give me strength to do well.'

She spoke in ways that indicated her personal involvement: her voice was warm, her facial expression was vivid, and she often gesticulated. It was evident that, as also shown in her aims, she wanted to touch the souls of her pupils. This approach raises the danger of indoctrination. As regards children's response, it appeared that, during class time, they were very quiet, though their teacher frequently questioned the extent of their concentration. Later on, in informal discussions I

had with these pupils, most of them told me that RE was boring, and that their teacher was 'good but strict', and 'they *had* to be quiet'.

Teachers encouraged me to observe the RE classes of teacher H, who was said to be 'specialised' in the area. When I observed her classes, she used the Bible as a source, because, she told me, she wanted children to 'learn to use it'; I thought that this could increase the validity of the taught contents. I also saw her asking students to memorise biblical extracts in Ancient Greek; also, speaking to the class, she used words and phrases in Ancient Greek. Her voice was loud, and her expression looked stern. She often tried to give directions:

> -'When did the Holy Ghost visit the disciples?' (teacher)
> -'When they were gathered in the House Of Lord, at Church' (children)
> -'We honour the Holy Ghost this Sunday, so, where will this Sunday find us? [she raises her voice in an authoritarian tone]. It should not find us sleeping in bed, or going on a trip, or playing or jogging. This Sunday, you should be at Church.'

In this way, religion may not be related to morally good behaviour but to rules and compulsory rituals, which may look unattractive to children, especially when presented by a teacher who was not very popular. Pupils of this teacher told me in the school bus: 'we are very quiet because we are afraid of her; she is strict but in a *bad* way'. Lack of fondness for the RE teacher can affect children's attitude to the subject. This point turns the discussion to teacher-pupil relationships, which are examined in the next part.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The relationships between *teachers and pupils* appeared to vary from classroom to classroom, and were largely influenced by the extent of *academic emphasis* in the school, as well as the choices of classroom teachers as regards *pedagogy* and *student participation*.

### Teacher-Pupil Relationships

Before examining teacher-pupil relationships in the case of different teachers, it is worth looking at teachers' and students' conceptions of these relationships:

> 'Children cannot comprehend all the love that adults may feel for them, they are very egocentric' (teacher E).

Other teachers believed that children had a strong intuition:

> 'The child understands whether you really love him or not; he has the sense of what is true' (teacher R).
> 'He knew that I really loved him [mentioning a highly undisciplined boy], though I was hard with him when he was going out of control' (teacher A).

Teacher A said that children could understand the nature of affection as well:

> 'The child can understand when you love him in a genuine or in a sentimental way; if you love him sentimentally, he usually becomes remote later, because he feels oppressed and wants his freedom. Usually we don't love freely' (teacher A).

These thoughts recognise the capacity of children to understand their teachers' feelings and moral qualities. The following examples illustrate the different impressions that different teachers could leave on students.

-*Teacher A* (grade 4):

When I told teacher A about my study, she expressed great interest in it and added:

> 'I think that children today are somehow institutionalised; they are very lonely, many families are impersonal, parents work such long hours, and school classrooms are often impersonal. Thus, the teacher has to cover much of what children's lives lack. You have to touch the child's feelings. Everything happens differently when the pupil feels close to the teacher. That is why I try to get close to each child' (teacher A).

I should add that some teachers told me that pupils of teacher A typically expressed rich feelings, because their teacher worked on developing these. Moreover, of all five classrooms where I asked pupils to write about how they liked their school, these students seemed to be, overall, the happiest of all with their teacher and their school. This teacher, when interviewed, appeared to be humble:

> 'I wish I had *more time* to deal with each child. *I am so sorry* that I have not helped so many children. Sometimes I go home feeling that some children were absent from me, and when I become aware of it and have the time, I attempt another day to make up for it. It has to do with the number of the children as well – if you have thirty-three pupils...'

This sense of not doing enough for children might lead her to struggling to do more. It is worth noting that children and teachers claimed that this teacher was one of the best in the school.

-*Teacher R* (grade 4):

When observing the playground at breaktime, I noticed that one day, during all the breaks, teacher R helped a student of hers with English. The teacher explained to me that her pupil had been very distressed in an English lesson, and she wanted to do something for her. She went on:

> 'I don't do something as good as that everyday. Today I happened to find the time; you cannot always take care of the individual child.'

I also noticed in the staffroom that when this teacher was correcting her students' work, she would often comment personally and encouragingly on their work: 'Bravo, my dear D', 'very good, my dear child'. She explained: 'Children remember all these; they need affection. Say something nice to them! Do you pay for it on a meter?' Informal discussions I had with her pupils demonstrated that all of them, even the most 'difficult' ones, liked and respected their teacher a lot.

-*Teacher V* (grade 6):

My observation of her teaching RE, as well as other teachers' comments, suggested that she was a calm and polite teacher, who enjoyed the affection and respect of her students. Nonetheless,

later informal discussions with her pupils showed that her behaviour could be unpleasantly different, which would annoy pupils:

> 'We don't talk with her, she doesn't ask about our own views; she does not care actually.' / 'She smacks children and then she says that we should have compassion for our fellowman. She has two characters.' / 'She looks nice and polite to others; she just pretends.'

These comments indicate that children, as teachers also previously said, can understand much about their teachers' qualities, while they can also be very judgemental.

The above four examples of teachers' behaviour display the different ethos that different teachers establish. This may also impact on the pupils' feelings about school. To understand more about teacher-pupil relationships, it is helpful to examine the issues of academic emphasis and pedagogy.

**Academic Emphasis**

The school prospectus mentioned 'high rates of success in higher education entrance exams', which made me think that academic emphasis at this school would be high. Staying in the staffroom during some breaks and teaching periods, I saw teachers regularly preparing worksheets and tests for students; breaktime was mostly dedicated to correcting students' work, commonly using stickers to reward diligence. I could see that teachers were so absorbed that they had little time to talk together - they also told me so. Time for me to spend with students was found with great difficulty, due to 'pressure for covering the material'. An explanation is that the school was private, and high academic performance, or putting efforts towards this end, would enhance the school's reputation and increase its clientele. I thought that, under these circumstances, if a teacher worked with less academic emphasis, anxiety about not preparing pupils adequately for the next grade or teacher would develop; I saw this happening in the case of teacher A (grade 4), who expressed feelings of guilt to me. In this way, the school ethos drove the academic emphasis. In informal discussions I had with pupils from various grades, they complained about taking many tests every week. I suggest that excessive academic emphasis can exert great pressure on children, making them less friendly to school and its messages. Another implication is that it can result, given the lack of time, in limited attention to moral, social and citizenship education, as not being directly related to academic success. For example, when I asked teacher A, who tried to help her pupils to befriend one another, why she did not discuss her efforts with other teachers, she replied that there was no time for that, as all teachers were 'extremely busy with correcting'.

Of relevance to academic emphasis and human relationships at school is pedagogy.

**Pedagogy**

Though the school claimed to pursue the 'socialisation of the students through groupwork' (School Prospectus), teachers' comments and my observations of classes indicated that this was not often the case, as the organisation of the desks (one behind the other) inside classrooms also suggested. Whole-class teaching was mainly employed, with the exception of two or three classroom teachers (D, E & S), who partially used more group-centred methods.

Teachers who implemented groupwork mentioned some difficulties:

> 'It is your work that has to be organised in groups, not the desks. It is hard to do so... You cannot make children start work in groups immediately, as they have not learnt to work that way. Even our university teacher who had taught us about groupwork, when he was asked to implement it, said that this was not easy to do with children unfamiliar with it' (teacher S).
> 'Groupwork is extremely time-consuming... and, since you have to teach the prescribed curriculum and cover the material, minimal time is left for it' (teacher E).

Given the difficulties of implementing groupwork when teaching, especially in a school with high academic emphasis, I thought that groupwork was more likely to be used in non-academic activities. Teacher A (grade 4) did so, by organising her pupils in teams. A pupil of hers told me:

> 'We do so many things; us, the Athletes, we organise games; the Historians prepare history quizzes; the Poets compose a poem and the Musicians make it a song; the Artists prepare a play... We organise all these by ourselves, well, sometimes, we ask our teacher a little' (Matina).

A problem is that in a school with strong academic emphasis there is minimal time for non-academic activities based on groupwork. Despite this, teacher A did not give up her efforts, probably because she strongly believed in the moral and social benefits of groupwork:

> 'I organise pupils in groups depending on their inclinations. Katerina, for example, paints very well, but she performs poorly; if she weren't distinguished as a painter, nobody would notice her. Group-centred activities are important, because it is the team that can have some success, thus the 'weak' children can enjoy success, learn from the more 'advanced' in the team and become better. Children become more sociable as well...'

The teacher particularly mentioned aggressive children:

> 'The aggressive children have not felt that they belong to a group and they attack the others to gain their attention; if they are integrated into groups, they adjust and do not consider that they have to impose themselves so that someone will notice them.'

Though this may be considered to be an optimistic forecast, groupwork can generally help children's socialisation.

Frequent use of whole-class discussions was a method which teacher D (grade 3) was said to follow systematically. My observation of her classes and her comments indicated that she often initiated whole-class discussions, in which it was not she but the children who ran the discussions, by giving one another the right to speak. The teacher interfered only when children lost track or

asked only their friends to speak. She explained: 'I want children to learn to discuss; I don't think that they are 'the little children' that we think they are.' Children's practice in holding discussions could be a first step to active participation in their school environment.

**Student Participation**

Similar to groupwork, student participation was not greatly promoted by the school as a whole. High academic emphasis might not leave time for promoting students' active participation. Emphasis on discipline, as discussed below, might not leave much scope for this either. Only teachers A and D seemed to make some efforts towards this end. Teacher A, who organised her students in groups as described above, explained her motives:

> 'I want my pupils to be active, to feel the school's life, to feel that education is not a convention but a pursuit of and participation in the world of knowledge and experience.'

I observed a way in which pupils' taking responsibility could be promoted. Teacher A, as I twice noted and as she told me, would readily suspend lessons to discuss misunderstandings between pupils and restore peace. I saw the teacher inviting the pupils involved to speak their views; she interfered only to ask for validation of the views expressed as well as to encourage children to apologise and forgive each other for their mistakes. I also realised that, as the process was going on, children were passing from judging the others for their mistakes to judging themselves. Importantly, towards the end, children looked relieved and eager for the lesson: 'a burden is taken from them, they don't feel guilty or irritated anymore' (teacher A). She added:

> 'I think that this offers children the chance to negotiate in ways that they will not find in other groups; even families leave problems lying unsolved.'

Such activities relate not only to participation, but also to the development of children's moral reasoning as well as of a positive classroom ethos. It was something which students could practise; teacher D (grade 3), who was said to treat children's misunderstandings similarly to teacher A, told me once: 'I did not need to interfere; children solved the misunderstanding alone. It took about one year to reach this level'. Such practices contribute to the quality of the relationships among pupils.

**Pupil-Pupil Relationships**

Children were reported by teachers to play 'very wildly' at breaktime in the playground. I was advised not to stay there because the balls they played with could injure me seriously; teachers with playground duties never stood there either. A teacher was sent to hospital the previous year, while staying in the playground was dangerous for children too, as shown by their comments and the daily accidents. I asked why they did not forbid ball playing and teachers answered: 'Children will go absolutely wild, we will not be able to hold classes'. Children's going wild did not appear to

involve, as my observations showed, much hitting and swearing at each other, because the teachers would not allow such incidents to go on for long. Though they did occur, teachers who had worked in other schools said that they were not as intense as elsewhere; possibly, the rules (as discussed below) and the religious features of the school were effective in discouraging such behaviour. Nevertheless, teachers still found that pupils were very wild; my observations showed that children mostly tended to quarrel with each other and to hit the balls aggressively. Children's strict family background was said to be a reason for children's aggressiveness:

> 'Children who come from traditional religious families that oppress them go wild' (teacher E).

Teachers' strictness was said to be another reason:

> 'Their teacher is very strict, she never lets them relax - see how wildly her pupils play, whereas the pupils of the other teacher who is calmer, are more quiet' (teacher G).

Of relevance to this is the comment of teacher R, who generally appeared to be calm and loved by her pupils: 'if you shout, you upset children and they go wild; you should try to control yourself.'

Teacher A related wildness to the context of contemporary life:

> 'Children get increasingly aggressive each year because of the whole context of their lives. They live in apartments, where they are shut in after school, watching TV instead of learning how to play. Give them a playground, they don't know how to play any group games, they can play only with a ball or electronic games.'

I recalled these words when joining a school trip to a park with swings, roundabouts and climbing-frames. Some boys played football, and only a few of the other children went to the swings for a while; the majority of children were devoted to electronic games: 'All children have their own electronic game, many of them have got two', a boy told me on the school bus. Children's lack of playing together can make them less able to socialise and cope with peers.

The next part examines how interpersonal relationships at school are related to discipline.

## RELATIONSHIPS AND DISCIPLINE

The relationships between the pupils, the teachers and the Head are tied up with how issues of authority and discipline are dealt with. This section presents the *Head*'s and the *teachers*' methods as regards *classroom* and *whole school discipline*, and finally questions the extent to which a satisfactory level of discipline and morally good behaviour go together.

**The Head**

Children's comments, suggested that there were noticeable inconsistencies in the behaviour of the Head of the school.

> 'The Head says: 'you should love one another' (Manolis, grade 4).
> 'Children don't like the Head. She pulls hair, ears, and she smacks children' (Yiannis, grade 4).
> 'She is very wild' (grade 6 boys).

While staying at school, I saw the Head often smacking, even in my presence, undisciplined children. Notably, she had told me that the morally good behaviour of teachers is more important than any teaching. I thought she might not have been able to control her temper, because she discouraged teachers from following her methods, explaining that she could not help herself sometimes. My discussions with students showed that they felt afraid of her, which often kept them from misbehaving. However, many children seemed to be used to being hit:

> -'I have been smacked five times. Some marks have also been left' (Thanasis, grade 6).
> -'Don't you mind about it?' (researcher)
> -'No, I have got used to it.'

Moreover, the Head identified undisciplined children by name publicly, usually angrily. I thought, as teacher M said on another occasion, that children got used to such assaults if they occurred daily. I was interested to see that the Head could also be very affectionate with children. For example, during the last days, she often stroked the hair of little children, saying 'I will miss my children.' I also saw her personally caring whenever a child had an accident and trying to comfort him/her. The inconsistencies in the behaviour of the Head might cause different feelings in children.

Teachers appeared to appreciate and like the Head, who appeared to be very friendly to them, and they never commented negatively on her methods in public. Probably, they could not do so, because they did not have permanent posts at this school, and the Head was superior to them; thus, they needed to have a good relationship with her. However, teachers occasionally recalled the calm ways of the previous Head, explaining the discrepancy in methods in terms of personality differences.

**Classroom Discipline**

Teachers often used the children's fear of the Head. Teacher E (grade 2) told me:

> 'I judge myself negatively for often threatening children that I will send them to the Head; then they become quiet, they are afraid of her. This is not appropriate pedagogically' (teacher E).

A pupil of grade 6 told me:

> 'Our teacher may not shout, but we are afraid of her, because she sends us to the Head if we misbehave' (Katerina).

Though it was not stated explicitly, and did not occur before me, it was known that some teachers would occasionally hit children; such a case was mentioned previously by pupils of teacher V. Even teacher A (grade 4) who, as shown above, tried consciously to contribute to her students' moral and social development, told me, one day, that she gave a smack to a child who always neglected his homework: 'I did so quietly, but I did it.' Notably, she condemned hitting children:

> 'I think it is unacceptable. It is a breakdown for the teacher; when I cannot do anything to reach the child, I hit him. This makes an autocratic teacher. I do not want to get to the point where I cannot prevent myself from hitting the child. There will be no gain. I have to stop myself; it is no excuse that the children irritate you. It is not a rational action.'

Teacher R, when interviewed, said similarly:

> 'It may occur to you, when the child goes beyond any limits, that you want to hit him, but this is *your weakness*.'

Regarding the effectiveness of such methods, it was mentioned by some teachers that children were used to it, also given that not a few parents hit their children. Teacher R continued:

> 'If you hit a child often, you make him get accustomed to it; you make him lose his self-esteem. In fact, you underestimate him as a person.'

I think that the Head and the teachers who hit children would embrace theoretically this idea, also given their religious beliefs. However, they did not always translate it into behaviour, which loads the school ethos with a serious contradiction. This contradiction might have gone unnoticed by them, perhaps because authoritarian methods, including hitting children, have not been uncommon or strongly condemned in Greek school practice in the past (Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides et al., 1994).

**Whole School Discipline**

Informal discussions with parents, teachers, and other school employees indicated that the school was distinguished, especially as compared to other state or private schools, for good discipline. Some parents even told me that the school's good discipline brought order into their children's lives. A basic way through which whole school discipline was kept was teachers' observing a set of rules. I distinguished the school rules as follows:

-*Written rules*: These were presented in the 'School Regulations' document, which defined the following as serious mistakes of pupils: misbehaving to other children, not conforming to teachers' instructions, neglecting the preparation of homework, hitting and pushing classmates, using bad language and bringing inappropriate books to school.

-*Lining up*: My observations indicated that each morning, and after each break, children had to line up and to go to their classrooms quietly, instead of rushing there, as teachers said happened at other schools.

-*School uniform*: Children were wearing school uniform, which was casual clothes. Parents and teachers told me that school uniform reduced the demands of children for many or expensive clothes. Objections to uniform were expressed, in informal discussions I had with pupils, mainly by older or female ones, who liked to wear the clothes they wanted and did not want to look different from other peers in their neighbourhoods.

-*Stickers*: In the school bus and at the breaktime, I could see that many girls collected stickers of media stars. I repeatedly saw teachers taking the stickers away from the pupils, saying that they were forbidden but without discussing why. Teacher K (Deputy Head) explained to me that such stickers were forbidden as often depicting 'love or sex scenes, which contaminate the children with the spirit of the age'. It appears that the teachers did not convince pupils as to why one should not deal with such stickers at school time, as they only became more careful about hiding while exchanging stickers.

-*Boys and girls*: In informal discussions I had with grade 6 students, they all said that their teachers disapproved of boys socialising with girls: 'they don't let us play with boys, they think in a wrong way about us, but we don't do bad things; if we are with boys, they misunderstand it; they start thinking like that as soon as we go into grade 4; it happens only in their imagination' (grade 6 girls). While observing at breaktime, I noticed that, contrary to teachers' advice, boys and girls of grade 6 socialised a lot with each other, seeming to be on very friendly terms. When I asked the two teachers of grade 6 about this, they avoided saying much, considering the above comments as overreactions of adolescent girls who liked boys.

I thought that the main problem with teachers' negative reactions towards both stickers and boys and girls' socialisation was that teachers did not appear to discuss, or even explain, their views. This may indicate their underlying inability to do so; probably teachers themselves did not know well why they were so negative to such issues, both having to do with sexuality; perhaps, the religious background of teachers also meant conservatism or repression. Another possibility was that teachers could account for their reactions, but were unwilling to do so to students, which made teachers appear authoritarian. Whatever exactly the reasons were, the point is that students did not welcome rules that were not negotiated with them, or at least explained, and which made them feel confused and annoyed.

**Discipline and Moral Behaviour**

Discipline is discussed not only as related to the school ethos, but also because discipline is concerned with behaving oneself, which is central to moral behaviour. Discipline at school means not only behaving oneself, but also conforming to the school discipline standards. I have always

thought that children who do not conform to the rules and behaviour patterns of a school might be more morally good than others think; they may just not fit in the school rules. Teacher E similarly said:

> 'Non-discipline at school, even aggressiveness, does not necessarily mean a psychologically disturbed emotional world and by no means excludes the existence and expression of virtues.'

Some teachers hinted at the responsibility of teachers and school to help these children:

> 'Undisciplined and aggressive children lack something. If you find it...' (Teacher A)
>
> 'Aggressiveness does not mean that the child does not have the elements of tranquillity... When the general climate is calm, the child expresses the good qualities that he and all people possess. If such positive stimulation were not provided, children could have been more aggressive still' (teacher E).

Overall, morally good behaviour can be too broad and deep to be defined by sets of rules, especially when these are not adequately negotiated with, or explained to, students. This situation also appears *undemocratic*; this point turns the discussion to politics.

## POLITICS

The presence of politics in this school is discussed with reference to the SCE subject, as well as to teachers' and children's speaking politically.

### SCE Subject

I was informed that, in recent years in the school, SCE (which is designed for grades 5 and 6) was undertaken by teachers other than the classroom teacher. These teachers (C and S) told me that pupils liked the subject, because it gave them the opportunity to talk, at an age when many questions emerged. These teachers also told me that they often employed whole-class teaching, because children should 'be told about some things' and because 'dialogue might never finish'.

At fieldwork time, SCE at grades 5 and 6 was taught by teacher S, whose overall presence, inside and outside class, indicated that she was a very polite and calm person. Pupils were said to be extremely noisy in her class; I witnessed this myself when observing. She explained their misbehaviour: 'I am not their teacher, so they grab the opportunity to have a break.' I saw these students being extremely quiet in RE classes with their teachers (V and K), possibly because these teachers were much older and stricter. At breaktime children admitted their misbehaviour to me: 'teacher S is so nice, she is not hard; that's why we are so noisy.' Most teachers appeared to know about these problems, but none interfered, as happened, for example, with discipline problems in English classes. This implied that SCE had a low status in the school. Low status was also indicated

by the fact that SCE was taught in the last two teaching periods of the day, which were also almost always devoted after Easter to preparation for the final school celebration. Teacher M also told me, avoiding mentioning names, that some teachers underestimated SCE. Teacher K, who told me that SCE was 'second-rate', explained that its themes could be raised through other subjects. Though this makes sense, separate time is often needed, as teacher M suggested. She and teacher C claimed that SCE had a low status 'due to the prevalent social assumption that there are first- and second-rate subjects'. I should add to this the high academic emphasis of the school, as well as the fact that SCE has political dimensions which a private school may avoid touching upon, because students may come from families with diverse political interests or ideas. This may also explain the fact that, according to the comments of the teachers who taught SCE, no 'political discussions' occurred in this teaching time.

**Speaking politically**

When I raised, in a discussion with teachers in the staffroom, the issue of talking about politics in class, all teachers agreed that politics should not enter classrooms and that students should be restrained from making any political comments. However, neutrality was not simple in practice. For example, during the NATO invasion of Serbia (May 1999), teacher (D, grade 3) said that her students complained to her about a British flag decorating a display, and then she told them that the position of Britain was very wrong. Discussing the incident with me, she concluded that it is narrow politics that should be kept out (e.g. party politics), and not broader political issues. Another issue as regards politics is that of fostering national spirit. The school prospectus and advertisement talked about 'Hellenic-Christian Education'[1], which implied honour given to the Greek nation and ideals, while some classrooms had decorations with national heroes. I thought that this emphasis was not politically free. Teacher K (Deputy Head) explained the school's position by saying that 'Orthodoxy supported Hellenism, and Hellenism helped the communication of Christianity'. School national celebrations and visits to places of significance in national history also indicated this emphasis. I wondered what national feelings were fostered in children. When joining a school trip to a place linked to the resistance to the Germans, I saw that most students were tired and bored with the efforts of their teacher (K) to move them with their ancestors' fights for freedom. Though some students appeared to favour these ideals[2], it seems, as discussed above,

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[1] As discussed in chapter three, Hellenism and Orthodoxy have been closely related in the Greek historical past.

[2] For example, a child wrote: 'My school reminds me of glorious parts of history, it makes me love my country.'

that teachers' speaking extensively about something becomes tiresome for students, often leading to effects opposite from the desired ones.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are presented at the end of this chapter because they appeared to relate largely to the religious and national ideals of the school, its high academic emphasis, and its private ownership. Precisely, as was indicated by some relevant school documents, teachers' comments and observations of mine, much of the time for extra-curricular activities was dedicated to church attendance, and religious and national celebrations. Visits to museums and places of national historical significance also occurred. I noted that most of them were organised by teachers in great detail, and little scope for student participation was left; for example, in a school trip to the place where the National Revolution against the Turks started, it was teachers and I who prepared fully a leaflet with relevant information, though students could participate as knowing much from related History lessons. I thought that lack of student participation had to do with the teacher-centred pedagogical approaches, the time pressure, and the dedication of most time and energy to academic work. I should also note that after Easter, which was the time when I stayed in this school, almost all non-teaching time was dedicated to learning to sing, dance and perform for the final school celebration; I noted that time from class and the break was taken for rehearsals. A Gym teacher explained to me: 'this is a private school, and this celebration has to do with advertising it'. Overall, I thought that extra-curricular activities were very structured, focused on religious and national ideals, and did not encourage students' initiative.

## OVERVIEW

As regards the fundamental issues of authority and discipline, pedagogy and the responsibility assigned to students, it was found that there was an important variation among teachers. Although the majority of approaches may be characterised as 'authoritarian' rather than 'democratic' (especially the case of hitting children), the more democratic approaches did not look marginal, possibly due to the stated Christian and moral concerns of the school. The latter seemed to be often in tension with the high emphasis on academic work, which can be explained with reference to the private ownership of the school and its reliance on clients and reputation. High academic emphasis appeared to absorb time and energy that could otherwise be devoted to discussions and activities related to moral, social and citizenship education. Regarding the impact of

the school's religious messages on children's moral and social development, it was found that over-emphasis on religion, and preaching approaches to it, made children bored and alienated. Conversely, when teachers tried to be simpler in their religious talk and consistent in their behaviour, the influence on children could be more positive. However important this influence was, contradictions in children's behaviour occurred. Though teachers at this school insisted that religious faith and morality are strongly related, it remains undecided, especially after only a five weeks' stay in the school, what impact the school's religious messages could have on children's personal development, especially given the contradictions in the behaviour of the Head and some teachers. Overall, the efforts of classroom teachers to treat children appropriately may be of greater importance for moral and social development than any particular statement and planned activities towards this end.

# CHAPTER SIX
# SCHOOL B

School B was the first of the three Athens state schools that I examined. Forming part of a set of schools in different socio-economic areas (see methodology), School B was included as being located in a deprived working-class area of Athens; students' parents, were, according to teachers, typically working-class, mostly doing manual work, and of a very low educational level. The differences in social contexts will be used to illuminate each of the cases and to support comparisons between them.

## THE CONTEXT

### The School and the Community

The school is located in a working-class Athens area, which was seriously affected by the earthquake of September 1999. Walking round the area, I could see that it was not very densely populated; there were many damaged houses and families living in tents. In the area there were also minority people, mainly gypsies. A sense of community, different from central Athens, was reported to exist:

> 'There are neighbourhoods here. It's more family-like than central Athens' (teacher T).
> 'This society is village-like, parents have known each other since their school years' (Schoolkeeper).

Teachers told me that the financial and educational level of families was low; most mothers were housewives, and fathers mostly worked in factories or building houses. The earthquake damage had aggravated the financial difficulties of families; some pupils were living in tents, and sometimes pupils mentioned to their teachers and me their shortage of basic stationery material. At the school, for each grade, there were two classes of fifteen to twenty children. Plenty of space seemed to exist, inside and outside classrooms.

### The Head and the Teachers

The Head and the teachers lived either in the area or nearby. The Head, as I noted and teachers said, cared mainly for administrative work and school maintenance, and did not interfere in teachers' work, except when asked to help with discipline matters. Teachers appeared to like him and one another, often joking together and socialising outside school. Teachers D and C told me

that the 'nice atmosphere' helped them feel comfortable and do their classroom work as they chose, which was important for their efforts.

## RELATIONSHIPS

This section discusses the relationships developed between *teachers and parents*, and *teachers and pupils*, as well as *among pupils*. Though *teacher-pupil relationships* and *discipline* appeared to vary from classroom to classroom, there were some common features in pupils' *morale* and *relationships* to one another, which appeared to relate closely to their community context.

### The Teachers and the Parents

At the first meeting of teachers with the parents' committee (which I observed), teachers took over from parents, against the will of the latter, the running of the school library, which parents had established years before. Parents looked very displeased; they asked for access to the school and the children, explaining that the school was 'a living community that should not be closed up'. I noted that during the following month parents were involved in ways such as volunteering to work as school traffic officers and organising Christmas and Halloween parties for parents, children and teachers.

Teachers often talked together about why they did not like parents' involvement in school:

> 'There are problems with parents entering the school; the door is left open and children go out. In other Athens schools, the door is kept locked during the school day; only teachers can enter school' (Head).
> 'At any moment, any of your behaviour may be misinterpreted... Parents are stupid. They don't know about school and learning; they think that the teacher who gives a lot of photocopies is the good one' (teacher D, teachers K & L nodding).

When observing the morning prayer, I noted that parents who took their children to school in the morning were not allowed to stay during prayer; I saw teachers sending them away. Such incidents might make parents feel unaccepted and underestimated by the school, also given their low educational and financial level. I thought that this could turn parents against the school and its work on values, which they might ignore or not support before their children. I was interested to note that, in this respect, teachers sought parents' cooperation:

> 'I want parents to cover me and support me as regards my practices on students' discipline and behaviour' (teacher D).

The Gym teacher complained to me that this did not occur:

> 'To make children start the process of accepting rules, we should have parental support, which does not happen. A pupil was calling me names in front of his mother, while I was nearby, and she did not reprimand him.'

Probably, it was not feasible, on one hand, to keep parents away from school, and, on the other, to have their co-operation and support on discipline. Discipline and teacher-pupil relationships are discussed below; the extent of academic emphasis at school is first presented, as related to pupils' and teachers' morale and attitude to school.

**Academic emphasis**

The broader school area did not generally perform well:

> '... West Athens suffers from pupils dropping out from school, which is real bleeding for the working population... Thirty percent of the pupils were 'cut' in the 2nd lyceum grade. They quit school or went to technical ones' (Teachers' Bulletin, found in the staffroom).

All teachers, when discussing students' progress, agreed that they overall had 'a very low level' like their parents, who were mostly said to be 'illiterate'; in two parents' meetings which I observed, I heard parents telling teachers that they felt weak in helping their children academically. Teachers D and T told me that the children's low academic level did not let teachers move beyond the textbook and use extra resources. Generally, teachers rarely seemed to prepare tests or other materials. When staying in the staffroom at breaktime, I saw that they mostly talked together rather than correcting pupils' work, or reading and preparing for the following lesson. My playground observations showed that children did not appear to discuss lessons or grades or to revise for the following lesson.

However, children were competing with one another. I cite one of several similar incidents I witnessed, when observing for a few days in the classroom of teacher D (grade 4). During a Greek lesson, a boy made many mistakes while reading aloud. 'Sir, he did *not* read it aloud at home!' a girl shouted. 'Close your mouth, silly!' teacher D answered her. Clearly, it is also a teacher's responsibility to respond to children's competitiveness. Most teachers told me that grades were very important for children and parents. Teachers D and C explained this with reference to the broader society and the school community:

> 'That's the attitude and psychosis of the Greek parent and society, especially of this school society, which is small, and people know each other: 'my child got this grade and yours that one'.'

This value attached to grades seemed to be used by teachers. For example:

> 'Why didn't you read? [teacher L, disappointed, says to her students during a RE class] Do you want me to test you repeatedly and assign grades?'
> 'Do I want kids to learn something now? Testing is a good motive' (teacher D).

This use of testing can feed the chase for grades. Apart from feelings of competitiveness, pupils' morale appeared to be distinguished by other features, discussed below.

**Pupils' morale**

Some characteristics of pupils' morale that I noticed are given below, under themes.

*Sensitivity to poverty*

When I asked, before Christmas, one class in grade 4 to write - without any previous discussion with me or their teacher – on how they felt about Christmas, the majority of pupils mentioned, additionally to Christmas joys, the earthquake victims:

> 'I feel sad for those who live in tents because of the earthquake and cannot feel Christmas' (Stavroula).
> 'This year, the children who have no house are sad because their parents do not have money to buy them Christmas toys... I have a lot and I want to give them a gift. I want to ask Santa Claus for an economical gift, so that he can get one for those children' (Aggeliki).

These thoughts of children show that their moral and social sensitivity can develop and should be understood not only in relation to the school ethos and the curriculum, but also in relation to their community context. Children, through family and social relationships, come in touch with the values, sensitivities and problems of their community.

*Respect*

Teachers told me that the community context influenced children's feelings of respect:

> 'Children are different here; parents are also different. For instance, parents come to listen to me, not only to speak themselves' (teacher F).
> 'Children and parents here are much more respectful to the teacher than in other areas, middle- or upper-class ones' (Gym teacher).

Teacher H explained: 'it's the air of money that children lack', or 'the snobbishness of wealthy children'. Notably, though most teachers reported that they generally felt more respected compared to those in schools in higher social class areas, I often heard them complaining to each other, and to parents, about children's lack of discipline. Some teachers mentioned children's sharing the values of the street:

> 'Children don't have the air of money, but they have another, tramp-like air, that of the street' (teacher H).
> 'In middle-class areas where I worked, children were more disciplined. Here children are on the street all day' (Gym teacher).
> 'Children belong to neighbourhood 'mafias'' (teacher L).

Observing children at breaktime and in class, I thought that their manners, especially the extensive use of slang and the tendency to hit each other, made teachers think this way. The above views of teachers also suggest that children's morale relates strongly to the community where they grow up. Teachers' awareness of this context appeared to influence their expectations of pupils' behaviour:

> 'It's o.k. pupils using slang. They are working-class kids and they hear their parents speaking like that' (teacher D).

I was interested to note, when observing this teacher's classes, that he occasionally used slang too. While observing classes and during breaktime, I also heard other teachers commonly using slang when speaking to children, even in an irritated manner, while children did not look surprised or offended. Teacher H related this behaviour of teachers to the broader context:

> 'I may use bad language in the classroom by accident... Well, if I were in another school, where the Parents' Committee would not accept that, I wouldn't do so.'

Thus, not only teachers' expectations from pupils but also teachers' own behaviour was influenced by the community context.

Overall, the above features of pupils' morale were related to community influences, which teachers appeared to recognise. More information on pupils' morale is presented with regard to the relationships that developed among them.

**Pupil-pupil relationships**

How children relate to each other has much to do with how they *play together*; the relationships among the pupils of this school were often marred by *aggressiveness* and *racism*.

***Playing together***

The area's lifestyle and structure seemed to facilitate children's socialization:

> 'This place is family-like. People are not as alienated as in other densely populated Athens areas. Houses are not very high, and kids have the sense of a neighbourhood, where they play together' (teachers H & T).

It was also the school's big space that made things easier:

> 'I like the school; it has plenty of space to play with my friends' (Manolis, grade 4).
> 'Very few Athens schools have such a big playground' (teacher B).

I also thought that the limited academic emphasis of the school gave freedom for children to play and socialise together. The availability of time and space did not mean that children could use them creatively. While observing at breaktime, I saw children very often hitting and swearing at each other. Moreover, they did not play games other than football or chasing one another. I also noted that, inside and outside classrooms, many children imitated movements from video games. Teacher V told me:

> 'Children don't play; they don't know how to play. One day, they had a rope and they were going around with it like fools... They watch TV and play electronic games; this does not make them happy. Their social ability does not develop either. If you play with somebody, there are rules you have to respect; that's why they are very undisciplined; you can see so many fights, 'me first, me first', and they start kicking each other.'

This statement seems to refer to children who live not only in the specific area but generally in densely populated urban places. Notably, a similar view was expressed in the first case study too, and it is worth exploring whether it will appear in the next ones.

***Aggressiveness***

My observations at breaktime, and teachers' comments, indicated that children's swearing at and hitting each other at breaktime (and not only then) was routine. Though teachers disapproved, they seemed to be used to it and interfered only when serious injuries occurred. Teacher H told me:

> 'Kids are always hitting each other at breaktime, and come inside bruised. I cannot hold court all the time; I become indifferent'.

Possibly, it is tiredness and helplessness that she felt. Many teachers told me that most children in this area were often hit by their parents when misbehaving – no cases of abuse were mentioned. Probably, parents of low educational level could not handle calmly children being naughty. The Gym teacher considered that this violence influenced negatively children's behaviour and teachers' work:

> 'If you beat a child once, you have lost the game. He learns to beat as well. The children who are hit by their parents cannot, in any case, stay quiet. The other children are more disciplined and calmer; they understand, after a second remark, that they are doing something wrong.'

Given this situation, the question is what teachers could do about it. I heard teacher H, at the first parents' meeting which she held, telling them:

> 'There's a lot to be done... not with threats and hitting – I don't think it's helpful – but in a friendly and calm way.'

Children themselves could also be talked to, as shown in the next incident from a lesson with teacher D:

> 'The text says: 'they grabbed him and they hit him a lot.' Did they do well? (teacher)
> 'Oh, yes!!!' (all the children together, looking and sounding excited, even glad)
> 'They did well???'
> 'Yes!!! (most children) / 'Maybe no...' (some children, possibly sensing that, since the teacher asked again, the right answer might have been 'no').

As can be seen, though teachers cannot change the fact that children are hit at home, they can take a non-indifferent position.

***Racism***

My stay at the school suggested that children could be hard on minority peers. One day when I observed classes of teacher D, I saw him suspending the lesson for one hour to deal with the fact that three of his male pupils hit a smaller boy, calling him 'gypsy'. The teacher asked the

classroom to describe the event, before interrogating the three boys. After all the children agreed that 'the boys hit the boy and called him gypsy', the teacher turned to them, who kept denying what they had said and done. When they finally admitted it, the teacher told them strongly how unacceptable it was to call someone 'gypsy' and hit him, especially a smaller and weaker boy. He took them to the victim's classroom, where they apologised to him. Afterwards, he ordered them to clear the playground of litter; he told all his pupils that similar behaviour in the future would be condemned. He explained to me: 'when there are many minority people, the other groups become annoyed, as they feel threatened because there are many gypsies here.' In this respect, children's context can influence their social behaviour negatively. Nonetheless, as shown above, the teacher intervened decisively. He told me: 'I condemn racism. I was angry, and I wanted to look angrier. I put up with slang expressions, but not with discriminatory ones.' It seems that pupil-pupil relationships, or at least some of their standards of behaviour, can be affected by teachers' intervention. The effectiveness of such intervention has much to do with classroom discipline.

**Classroom Discipline**

In teachers' discussions, as well as in parents-teachers' meetings, a major issue was pupils' misbehaviour in lesson time and breaktime. Different teachers reacted differently.

When observing classes of teacher H, whose children were said to be among the most difficult, I saw her often suspending the lesson for a while:

> -'Miss, he called me a gypsy.'
> -'Gypsies are also people like us and have got souls' (teacher).

She told me that lack of time made her selective:

> 'I don't interfere a lot in problems between them. I have to spend 15 minutes per hour to settle them. They fight and then come back together and then fight again. These things never finish. I cannot lose time. I asked them to tell me only their serious problems.'

Later, she told me that, 'sometimes', she became 'indifferent to children's fights'; I thought that she said so because she seemed tired with children's behaviour. Teacher D was more decisive:

> 'All children and classrooms, if you put some order and set limits, to the social relationships as well, can improve a lot.'

Not all teachers felt so confident. Teacher A told me once:

> 'Did you hear me screaming? He drove me mad. He threatens children that he will do harm to them when school is over. He also told me that I had no right to tell him about what he might do after school was over.'

Perhaps, it is not only a matter of how teachers themselves behave in the classroom; discipline also depends also on how severe children's misbehaviour can be.

Punishment was often mentioned in the staffroom. As shown above, children appeared to fight a lot outside the classroom and to bring their anger into the class.

> -'I don't beat my classmates', you will write it 50 times as a punishment, and your parents have to sign it' (teacher D to two pupils, at the beginning of class time).
> -'They write many times anything bad they did' (explaining to me).

In teachers' discussions on this issue, I noticed that many of them appeared uncomfortable with this method; teacher A explained that a teacher who used it in a school nearby met serious problems with parents who reacted against it. Teacher D, whose class was considered as the most 'difficult' one at the beginning of the year, persisted in using punishment, explaining to me why:

> 'Kids misbehave because they have learnt to do whatever they want and remain unpunished. They should learn that certain actions have certain consequences... Kids feel very bad every time they have to write something and show it to their parents who may punish them... This functions discouragingly.'

Teacher A told me that she rejected punishment as being an external motive, inferior to and less effective than internal ones:

> 'I pay much attention to cultivating a deep personal relationship with the pupils, I don't like to impose myself through fear and punishment; when these are over, the child will not care to behave himself. I want to develop internal motivation... I believe that anything can be discussed.'

Though not giving up these views, she mentioned her serious difficulties:

> 'When children have been brought up and disciplined with yelling, hitting and punishments and you don't use these means, they conceive of your behaviour as weakness about imposing yourself as a teacher. Yesterday, one child drove me crazy because he was totally ignoring me.'

Teacher D told me that children were not ready for internal motives:

> 'God punishes the little people; to the ancient Jews, God was a Punisher. Christ, God of Charity, came later, when people had developed a civilisation. To persuade children not to do something, that is to develop their own motives, needs psychoanalysis, and I don't have time to do thirty psychoanalyses. I can try to improve behaviour on the level of its appearance so that I can do my work.'

Though it may not take psychoanalysis to cultivate internal motivation, tackling misbehaviour sometimes seemed to be urgent to enable a teacher to 'stand' in the classroom. The question is when it is appropriate, and to what extent, to use 'external' or 'internal' means, and how a teacher should pass from one to another. I suggest that if pupils come to like and respect their teacher as a person – it may be more difficult to feel the same respect for all their classmates – they try to behave themselves, not for the fear of punishment any more. This point directs the focus to teacher-pupil relationships.

**Teacher-Pupil relationships**

Various examples of teachers and their relationships to their students are offered in this section. A first point is that children appeared to develop critical insights into how their teachers felt about them. For example, pupils in grade 4 wrote for me about their teacher:

> -'... our teacher gives justice to anyone who needs it. He may shout and impose punishments, but it's all right because he does well' (Gogo).
> -'He teaches us a lot, we have fun and we love him, as he loves us as well' (Dimitris).

The last point shows that children have, apart from a sense of justice, a sense of being loved. Teacher D verified this to me: 'Children can certainly understand that I love them. They can try harder for the teacher they like.' In this respect, I was interested in points made by pupils of teacher L (grade 6), who always appeared to be very calm, communicative and polite, inside and outside the classroom. Many of her pupils, when asked to write (for the last questionnaire item) what the school offered them, mentioned 'affection and learning', 'caring' and 'feeling loved'. By contrast, none of the twenty pupils in the other class in grade 6 made such points when answering this question. Development of feelings of trust and affection between teachers and pupils is important in that it can create a warm atmosphere in the classroom, and avoids making any elements of moral and social instruction sound pretentious.

Specific, or even small, things that teachers do can be beneficial for their relationships to students, or students themselves. For instance, teacher D had a pupil who performed very badly and looked 'weak', even sad. I noticed that the teacher placed the child at the desk next to him, often encouraging and helping him with his writing, saying: 'He is the teacher next to (or 'with') me'. After some time, I could see that the child started performing better and looked happier[1]; later in the year, the teacher told me that the mother of the boy thanked him for making her son feel comfortable at school for the first time, and 'not a burden any more'. I thought that the dignity and self-esteem of the child were not being destroyed but supported, which was fundamental to his development as a person.

Another issue is the appearance of contradictions in teachers' behaviour. For example, in the breaktime, I could see teacher Y being very irritable, often yelling, and swearing, at children who misbehaved. When I stayed in the staffroom in lesson time, I could hear him yelling at his pupils (grade 1) and using slang, usually in a very irritated way; I thought that this would frighten children. Other teachers verified my impressions, but some of them implied that undisciplined children needed someone so strict. Teachers who had known him for years told me: 'five minutes after he has shouted, you see him stroking the heads of children, and bending to their shoelaces. He

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[1] The teacher asked me, when observing in his class, to help this boy with his writing sometimes.

is very affectionate' – I witnessed such incidents myself. What the children may receive from this teacher is something that could not easily be appreciated by others; possibly it is only the children who can tell, helped by the strong instinct they are said to have.

Another issue to be considered while examining teacher-pupil relationships is pedagogy.

**Pedagogy**

I noted that the desks in most classrooms were put one behind another in three rows, suggesting that whole-class teaching was largely used; my observations of the lessons in most classrooms also indicated that groupwork was rarely employed. The reasons for this were once discussed in the staffroom. Teacher K mentioned problems with pupils' behaviour:

> 'I tried groupwork last year with grade 1, hoping that children could learn from the beginning, but it was impracticable. I did not have the patience to do it. Children became very undisciplined. Great competition also developed between the teams. Let the professors who support it come and teach like that.'

Teacher A (grade 4) met similar problems:

> 'It was very difficult to work in a collaborative way. There was great competition between the teams. 'Weak' students were also accused of not being able to do well and were marginalized in both their team and the classroom. It was highly time-consuming and not effective.'

She pointed out a gap in the broader system of education:

> 'There is a problem in the organisation of the education system, over the transition to further education stages. It is unreasonable that children learn to work in groups when they have to go to secondary school, which is not at all group-centred; it is highly competitive and individualistic, pursuing high grades and material coverage. To prepare pupils successfully for secondary education, you need to make them learn good grammar and Maths.'

The level of the children seemed to be another factor:

> 'How can groupwork be done when the level of the children and their families is very low, and the children cannot talk or are very undisciplined? They talk to each other and deal with other things' (Teacher B, grade 1).

Especially, lack of discipline was said to be a major obstacle. Teacher D (grade 4), whose pupils were said to be among the 'most difficult' ones, said:

> 'You can have groupwork only when you can work in this way, meaning when there is a group spirit in your classroom or when you can develop it. It was real hell with groupwork in my classroom last year.'

Teacher H (grade 5), when interviewed, mentioned, apart from discipline problems, the time perspective, which I found important:

> 'For the time being, these children cannot do that. Kids are always saying: 'I'll do it, I'll do it!', trying hard to impose themselves on each other; they'll try to do so for much longer, I think... My pupils last year [in another school], who were much 'stronger', could

> do it. It has to do with maturity, not with academic ability; though you can acquire the latter, the maturity to collaborate is not that simple; it takes time.'

She added: 'I will start with some pupils who are more willing.' Moreover, later that year, teacher D told me that after his pupils became more disciplined, they worked at Handicrafts successfully in groups. Non-academic activities may be a good start. I saw teacher C (grade 5) organising his pupils in groups for some gardening activities. I also saw handicrafts made by pupils of grade 6 organised in groups; later that year, their teacher (L) told me that they would proceed to edit a classroom newspaper. Overall, it seems that time and persistent efforts are needed. It is also a matter of the teacher's choice, as can be seen in what teacher H (grade 3) told me:

> 'I *attempt* to use groupwork. Children are not used to it. I attempt to make them learn to work in this way; it requires time, but I prefer to 'miss' three lessons to help them learn it.'

Another issue as regards pedagogy is that, while observing classes, I noticed that when the teacher (or I) was speaking, children were much more attentive than when their classmates spoke. I could see that in discussions in class, children would speak together, make a noise and lose track. Teachers told me:

> 'It is due to the established view that it is the teacher that should be attended to. We the teachers may hold this view as well' (teacher F).
> 'Children see the teacher as leader in the classroom, as the person who knows all. This may be due to home influence; parents also consider that teacher is the person who knows more' (teacher H).

The seriousness of these reasons does not mean that teachers are extremely weak in reacting to the situation. I saw teachers trying to do so constructively: 'Stop it - the girl is talking. Why don't you respect her?' (teacher D)

The next part, which concerns extra-curricular activities, gives more information about interpersonal relationships in this school.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are discussed as related to the school ethos and the exposure of children to stimuli that may relate to their personal development. During my stay at this school, I did not see teachers initiate pupils into active participation in the life of the school or the community. Teachers, possibly due to the generally poor performance of students, did not seem willing to devote time and energy to extra-curricular activities, apart from the established celebrations at national anniversaries and Christmas. From the teachers' discussions which I witnessed, I could see that they tried to take children to plays, but the cost of the tickets discouraged them from going more than once; the play they went to did not cost much. It appears that the low

financial level of students deprived them of access to cultural products that could contribute to their personal development. I thought that this gap could be filled, to some extent, if children participated actively in the life of their school and their community. Towards this end, the Gym teacher stressed to me the feasibility and the importance of individual efforts:

> 'There is always time for a teacher to organise something nice with his students, for example, to grow small trees around the school yard, so that children do something for the environment and learn to respect it.'

I noted that neither he nor other teachers made any such efforts at this time; I was told that only the previous Gym teacher had done so in the past. Teachers did not take such initiatives possibly because pupils' low academic level made time look limited for involvement in non-academic activities; another reason could be that teachers were not interested in undertaking such efforts.

The next section discusses the presence of religion at school and the values and attitudes that this involved.

## RELIGION

Religious messages at school were offered through the established *religious activities* and the *teaching of RE*, while the relevant values and attitudes of the teachers and the community appeared to play an important role.

### Religious Activities

The religious activities of the school were those established by the relevant law (1566/1985), that is *morning prayer* and *church attendance*.

#### *Morning Prayer*

Reaching school at the beginning of each school day, I observed that when the bell first rang, pupils lined up under the instructions of a teacher; a child came to the front to say a short prayer. Neither the Head nor all the teachers were always present; a few teachers – not always the same – stayed talking in the staffroom, which suggests that they might not find the morning prayer important. I could see, and teachers also noted, that many children made the sign of the cross wrongly, but nobody would correct them, except a teacher of grade 1 who helped her pupils. Children generally seemed to repeat the movements and the words of prayers mechanically, often looking at the parents who had been sent out of school or at children coming late. They sometimes whispered to one another; they were reprimanded only when this was very obvious. Only the Gym

teacher told me later, when being interviewed, that something should be done by teachers to make children more respectful at this time.

***Attendance at Church***

Teachers told me that the school took children to church only once or twice a year (i.e. before Christmas); I thought that church attendance was not more frequent (as I knew it was in other schools) possibly because, as shown above, teachers did not appear to be interested in religious rituals. I was told that at church, children were kept quiet under teachers' surveillance, though they did not seem to concentrate. I confirmed this, when observing a church service attended by a group of older pupils only. I thought that to avoid the possibility that church service becomes a meaningless, incomprehensible religious ritual, irrelevant to one's spiritual life, teachers should explain some things to children. RE could give such opportunities; I witnessed such a case, when observing a RE class taught by teacher D:

> 'The textbook says 'we enter church, where we meet the others, and we feel closer to them and to God. Is it necessary for feeling closer to go to church?' (teacher)
> [Children do not seem to know.]
> -'What do you feel at church?'
> -'Peace and tranquillity' / 'If we have done something wrong, a load goes away' / 'It makes me concentrate' / 'I think at that time what bad things I have done' / 'It helps me become a better person' (children).

Teacher D continued, speaking in a tone that suggested he believed what he said, while children seemed to attend carefully:

> 'A church is the House of God... In our house, we can pray, and if we ask for the grace or help of God, we get it there as well. But churches are made in ways that help us through the environment - the icons, the incense, and the little light - to feel closer to God and to get calm... A church is a human piece of work, so that people who go there can feel closer to God. Have you heard about Saint Sophia, the big cathedral? It has a dome with many little windows, through which very little light comes into the church, that is half dark, as most churches are. Entering the church, this light makes you lift up your head. The church building has achieved that you lift up your head on entering it; it makes you approach God.'

I thought that the teacher would not speak on such issues in this way, if he were not personally interested and involved, which is mostly a personal rather than a professional choice.

**RE subject**

The teaching of RE is examined with regard to the popularity and status of the subject, and critical questions that teachers and children posed there, as well as to the issue of religious freedom.

*Popularity and status*

My observations of RE lessons at grades 4, 5 and 6, as well as teachers' comments, indicated that children were generally fond of the lesson. Teacher L (grade 6) explained it with reference to the community context:

> 'Almost all the kids go to Sunday school. The society here is more traditional; people are a little old-fashioned in their principles; it's like the rural societies. The parish priest is also very active; he organises sports, lessons on drawing, icon painting, and computing for children' (teacher L).

The role of the classroom teacher should not be overlooked. For example, in one grade 6 class, where the teacher taught RE mostly by asking children to read the lesson from the textbook, many children wrote, in their questionnaire responses, that this subject was boring, contrary to the pupils of teacher L. Notably, though religious instruction appeared to be generally supported by the community context, the data also indicated that RE was often assigned a lower position as compared to other subjects. Teacher H said:

> 'Children certainly distinguish first-rate from second-rate subjects. They say it's only RE or SCE, it's o.k. I think this comes from parents; it's Greek and Maths that are very important for them'.

When observing a parents' meeting for grade 5 (teacher H), I heard most parents calling the subjects of RE and SCE 'second-rate'. Explaining the two subjects' role in developing children's expression, the teacher tried to keep parents from devaluing them. Notably, while doing so, she also called the two subjects 'second-rate'; probably, she was influenced by the relevant established view in Greek education (Noutsos, 1979). A reason for the lower status of RE was that it was seen as having little relevance to future education and career advancement; for example, a boy wrote in the questionnaire:

> 'The subject I consider least important is RE because I don't think it will be of great use to me in the future' (Giorgos, grade 6).

Though RE was often devalued, teachers would sometimes make children interested in it by raising critical questions.

*Critical Questions*

In RE lessons that I observed, teachers could stimulate children's interest and sensitivities:

-'What was Jesus' work?' (teacher H)
-'To educate people' (child).
-'Really?'
-'To give joy to people' / 'To give a good example' / 'To make people learn to be nice' (children).
-'Which means what?'
-'To defend their fellowmen' / 'not to betray people' / 'to love others, friends and enemies'...

-'Miss, since they are enemies, why should we love them?'
-'Hear what your classmate says. Why should we love them?'
-'Christ loved people.'
-'This is true. It is certain that Christ loved all people, but why should we also do so?' (teacher)
-'So that the world will live in peace.'
-'What is peace? Why should we have peace?'
-'The world is better, the culture develops, and people make progress and become educated.'

Such discussions may promote the development of students' thinking and moral and social behaviour. I noticed, however, that children easily jumped from discussions like this to discussions like the following one.

*Curiosity*

-'Miss, what was God made from?' (child 1)
-'I think he is a big eye, since he sees all of us.' (child 2)
-'He can also be a big ear, since he hears everything.' (child 3)
-'Miss, what is God? ... How did he make all these?' (child 4)...

I saw all children, including the more indifferent ones, listening with great interest. The teacher's (H) expression showed her difficulty in answering; she asked for my view. She told me later:

> 'It's their age and curiosity that make them have so many difficult questions. I think that parents don't discuss such issues with their children, including parents who go to church... You feel weak in front of such questions.'

When I discussed this issue with teacher L (grade 6), she expressed to me her disapproval of her pupils' curiosity about the Apocalypse and prophecies, suggesting that this relates to superstitions and bad influences from uneducated parents. My observations of the previous class and her class indicated that such queries and discussions could dominate whole teaching periods, excluding any moral and social issues.

*Tackling curiosity*

My observations suggested that some teachers felt more confident than others about discussing complex issues -- they possibly had a better grasp of them; they also related them to human behaviour:

-'Why did Christ invite Judas to become his disciple? Did he know or not that Judas would betray him?' (teacher D)
-'He knew'; 'Christ knew it; he was God himself.' (children)
-'He did know. Then, why did he invite him?'
[Children look very curious].
-'Christ thought: one way or another, I will be betrayed, so he can come' / 'Christ invited him, God forgives all.' (children)
-'Christ wanted to give to Judas the chance not to do it. We Christians, we believe that we have freedom to do good or bad' (teacher).

Difficult issues might not be so relevant as this to children's moral behaviour:

> -'How do Christians console themselves and each other? How do Christians see death?' (teacher D)
> -'As they see life' (child 1).
> -'Exactly... Death is either eternal peacefulness or eternal upheaval. What does 'he slept' mean?'
> -'He died' (child 2).
> -'We Christians, we believe that, at some moment, Christ will come again on earth, he will raise the dead people, and we will wake up, that's why we say 'we sleep'... Christ came once, we crucified him and he ascended to the skies... After the Second Presence, we will live with God's blessings. We will all be happy and not hurt each other' (teacher D).
> -'I will see my grandpa' (child).
> [Children look extremely curious, asking for details.]
> -'Our mind is too small to understand these things. You either believe it or not. Christ said it. If you want, you believe it' (teacher D).

Clearly, the teacher - who told me that he was an Orthodox Christian - wanted to leave choice to children. This raises the major issue of religious freedom, which ultimately has a moral basis. Though children should not be forced to embrace the religious beliefs of teachers, the problem is to what extent children are free to decide by themselves on religious matters at this young age, also given the influences they receive from family and community.

***Freedom and discrimination***

In a grade 5 RE class that I observed, the teacher (C) asked pupils to say how they understood this sentence in the textbook lesson: 'With the Grace of God and our own efforts many things can be corrected.' He did not state his own view, and he repeated the suggestions that the pupils made. I asked him later why he asked children to comment, instead of stating his own view – I knew he was a churchgoer. He replied:

> 'When we were pupils in the past, we went through propaganda. I don't like indoctrination; I disapprove of it. I avoid saying what I believe in.'

The issue of freedom is better understood as related to other religions:

> -'What is faith?' (teacher D)
> [Children find it difficult to answer.]
> -'We believe in God' (child 1).
> -'This is important. We believe that there is *someone*.'
> -'Other foreign people believe in other Gods' (child 3)
> -'Yes, they believe in *another* God' (teacher D).

When interviewing teacher D, I told him that children might take the last to mean that there are many gods. He said:

> 'God is not one in the sense that everyone believes in the God he wishes... I'm very sensitive to this; one believes whatever one wants. If someone is not an Orthodox Christian, I will not tell him to become one, as if I believe in Truth and he believes in Lies. I think that this is fascistic... If we accepted the others, we would say, believe in any God

you want. Kids start speaking not nicely about Jehovah's Witnesses - the school cleaner is one. I cannot understand this discrimination.'

Clearly, religious freedom is close to the fundamental values of tolerance and respect as opposed to discrimination, from which children did not seem to be very detached. These issues are not simply religious or moral; they are largely political too.

## POLITICS

The presence of politics in this school is examined with reference to the *SCE subject* and the *political comments* of teachers and children.

### SCE subject

From children's responses to the open items in the questionnaire, as well as from teachers' and parents' comments, I learned that the status of SCE was often lower than that of subjects such as Maths and Greek. Thinking about careers was again one reason:

> 'SCE is the least important subject, because when I get a job I will not be asked whether I know about it' (Maria, grade 6).

Teachers seemed to contribute to the devaluation of SCE:

> 'It's an one-hour subject; it's often not taught, because something always happens' (teacher H).
> 'It is in the last hour. I don't do it always, only if I have enough time; I usually continue teaching the other subjects' (teacher C).

As regards pedagogy, my observations and comments by teachers and pupils suggested that dialogue was mainly used:

> 'Children discuss a lot. I try to expand beyond the textbook... I did not complete the textbook lesson yesterday; there was no time left for it after talking' (teacher H, grade 5).
> 'A reason I like SCE so much is that we have discussions' (Anastasia, grade 6).
> 'I like to discuss with my teachers issues like that' (Sophia, grade 6).

It seems that children liked to be given a voice, but discussion, as described previously, was not without its problems. When observing classes at grade 6 by teacher V, who combined dialogue with whole-class teaching, I saw that pupils attended much more carefully to the teacher's than to classmates' talk. In the other class of grade 6, things were different; the teacher (A) let me observe his classes only twice, not looking comfortable about it. My thoughts that he was not very interested in the subject, were confirmed when I noted, while observing his teaching, that he did the lesson by keeping the textbook open and asking students to read from it. Informal comments of students also suggested that they found SCE boring.

As to whether generally pupils liked to discuss socio-political issues, views were divergent:

'My pupils detest politics' (teacher D, grade 4) / 'They like it' (teacher H, grade 5).
'I like SCE because we learn about systems of government' / 'I'm not interested in learning about the state' (pupils, grade 6).

Possibly, how the issues appeal to students relates strongly to how their teacher addresses them, as well as to what personal attitudes children have already formed. As explained in chapter two, holding discussions is a major part of children's initiation into political life.

## Speaking Politically

Teachers and children could *express themselves politically* in the *taught* and *non-taught curriculum*; the issue of the *national spirit* appeared to be a relevant one.

### *Taught curriculum*

One teacher may speak politically in class and admit doing so, whereas another does not, possibly due to lack of awareness. Teacher V insisted to me that he kept politics out of teaching; he also disapproved of my talking with pupils in grade 6 about the Kurds, arguing that I spoke politically. He claimed: 'I don't speak politically in the classroom. I am not to do propaganda. Children may also go to their parents and say what the teacher said.' A week later, I thought he contradicted himself when I observed him teaching a lesson about the nation, the state and imperialism:

-'What do the Americans say boastfully when appearing on TV? (teacher)
-'We have great power' (children)
-'Exactly, we are strong and we do anything we want' (teacher V) [he goes on to explain the term 'imperialism']. 'Do you know any examples?'
[Children do not seem to know]
-'Remember the news. What happened at Kosovo? ... The Americans supported the Albanians. Why did they do that, with good intentions? No, due to interest, the soil there is very rich... What the US did was an imperialistic war against a state that did not hurt anyone.'

On my telling him, afterwards, that he also spoke politically, he replied that he could not find another example of imperialism; possibly, he could not; I thought that he did mean to be 'neutral', because he had connected speaking politically to conducting indoctrination. I also thought that teachers might not feel free to speak politically when teaching; however, as regards the non-taught curriculum, which has a more implicit nature, both teachers and students may feel freer to express themselves politically.

### *Non-taught curriculum*

On the staffroom tables, I often saw newsletters being critical of the lack of government support for the people affected by the earthquake and for the education of the working-class

children in the broader area; it was not explained to me whether teachers or non-school committees brought these newsletters to school. Teachers used to discuss relevant problems, living themselves in areas not very far away. Children, as inhabitants of the area, might have relevant experiences and ideas, though it did not appear to me that they brought them up in class. However, they expressed their attitudes very openly when participating in a parade for a national celebration that I observed. When committees of workers and left-wing parties deposited flowers in memory of the dead, the majority of the children applauded - possibly because their parents supported, or belonged to, these groups, while they shouted down the right-wing representatives. Their exclamations were so loud that they caused embarrassment to some parents and to the Gym teacher who organised the parade; he told me: 'this happens every year'. Political exclamations by children at national celebrations direct attention to the issue of national spirit, which has a political dimension as well.

*National Spirit*

In a SCE class I observed by teacher V at grade 6, I recorded the following dialogue:

-'What are the symbols of the Greek state?' (teacher)
[Children do not seem to know.]
-'These symbols are the Flag and the National Hymn... What do you feel when you see the flag, when you listen to the National Hymn?' (teacher)
[Children do not know again.]
-'Sorrow?...'
-'No.' (some children)
-'You feel sorrow, joy, pride...?'
-'Joy?' (hesitant child, maybe guessing)

Teachers mentioned to me children's ignorance of national history and lack of patriotic feelings:

> 'Children know very little... My class may know a lot now because I have told them... Children of today don't have relevant experiences, such as grandparents who fought or parents who suffered in the War' (teacher L).

Teacher T said that his generation did not have such experiences either, but they had more patriotism.

I should note that this occurred although the songs and poems that children said at a school national celebration I observed had titles and phrases such as 'Greece never dies', 'glorious past', 'fearless warriors' and the like. Probably, children were not touched by 'big words'; on the contrary, these may have acted negatively: For example, teacher A (grade 4) told her colleagues that a pupil of hers asked her: 'the song says 'Greece is sent from God and is well honoured.' Didn't God create the other countries as well?' Moreover, all pupils in grades 5 and 6 participated each year in a national parade in the central streets of the area. It did not seem to be their patriotic but their social feelings that were satisfied: 'They like it because their friends and family come to see

them' (Gym teacher). Thus, it would seem that the previously mentioned incidents of racial discrimination did not have anything to do with strong national feelings.

I heard the parents' committee complaining to the teachers that children were disrespectful at the parade, when shouting down some political committees. Parents requested the establishment of the ceremony of raising and lowering a Greek flag every school day, while chanting the National Hymn, so that children would learn to respect the national symbols. Teachers disagreed:

> -'There's no sense in raising the flag in the morning and taking it down at noon. Do you put a flag up in your house? Will ceremonies save us?' (Teacher Y – most teachers nod)
> -'The ideals of religion and the nation are inspired and nurtured by the family first. If not...' (Teacher K)

This scene raises the issue of what influence the formal activities at school may have; it shows how easily parents and teachers may attribute responsibility to each other for children's behaviour.

## OVERVIEW

Some features of children's morale in this school, such as aggressiveness and slang use, some sensitivities and preferences of a socio-political nature, their racial attitudes, as well as their respect for religion, can be understood only if related to their community context. Children's being aggressive and using slang appeared to be to a great extent influences from their parents, who, themselves influenced by their low educational level, were said to often behave like that. Children, living in an underprivileged area within working class families, appeared to have developed social sensitivities for those in need as well as some preferences for left-wing political parties. Children would also often discriminate against peers racially, though they did not seem to have developed strong national feelings; their racial attitudes can be understood with reference to the fact that Greek people in the area felt threatened by minorities who lived there. The socio-political nature of children was not developed by active participation within the community or the school. Their poor academic performance seemed to hinder teachers from encouraging their students to take part in non-academic activities. As regards religion, children's coming from families with some traditional principles made them respectful to it; however, religious ceremonies lacked authenticity. RE appeared to be popular, but children's metaphysical questions often seemed to overlook its moral and social aspects. Beyond any general impressions like these, the school appeared to be very diverse as regards pupil-teacher relationships, classroom discipline, as well as RE teaching; this diversity indicates the great importance of the classroom teacher and the ethos he/she establishes, rather than any general features of the school.

# CHAPTER SEVEN
# SCHOOL C

This chapter presents the findings of the third case study, which I conducted in an Athens state school in a traditionally wealthy area; pupils were said, by the teachers and the Head, to come from families at an upper financial and educational level.

## THE CONTEXT

### The School

This state school, located in central Athens, had a strong academic tradition, and most of its teachers were said to have received more education than teachers at other state schools. The school attracted children from different Athens areas; no pupil belonged to an ethnic minority. The school had six teachers, one for each grade, each with thirty pupils. The primary school shared the building, as well as a small playground, with the respective secondary school, due to lack of space.

### The Parents

Teachers told me that parents were well educated, very few of them not having a university degree, while their good education was typically accompanied by 'at least middle-class financial and social status' (Head). Both the Head and the teachers told me that parents were very co-operative with the school, in that they often supplied teachers with resources (e.g. tape recorders) and stationery (e.g. photocopy paper) to support the teaching; I saw parents of all grades often visiting the school to offer such materials to teachers, who looked very grateful. I even saw parents of grade 1 preparing with teacher N new curtains for the classroom. The parents' committee also organised the teaching of foreign languages to children after lunchtime. I also observed that parents often visited or phoned the school to ask about their children's progress; I heard teachers sometimes complaining to each other about the frequency of these calls, but I never saw or heard that they complained to parents directly, possibly because the latter frequently provided teachers with material resources. Overall, I thought that this behaviour of parents indicated great interest in their children's learning.

### The Head and the Teachers

Typically, I saw the Head moving around the school, seeking to ensure that everything ran well. Having delegated administrative tasks to other teachers and to the two schoolkeepers, she had time for contact with parents, children and teachers. Most teachers at the school held

more than one university degree or had received further education training. Teachers seemed to get on well with each other, but lacked time for socialisation; at breaktime, I noticed that they were very busy photocopying worksheets, or correcting pupils' work: 'everyone is lost in his own work here' (Gym teacher).

## RELATIONSHIPS

The ways in which pupils related to each other and to the teachers appeared to be closely related to the extent of the *academic emphasis* in the school. *Pupils' morale* also played an important role in forming these relationships; teachers' choices as regards *classroom discipline* and *pedagogy* were important as well.

### Academic Emphasis

At breaktime and in non-class time, I would see teachers spending most of their time marking students' work, preparing worksheets, and making photocopies of them. All teachers told me that students' level and potential were high; moreover, I never heard them, when observing classes, reprimanding their pupils for neglecting their reading; neither did I hear them complaining to their colleagues about their pupils' performance. 'Out of thirty pupils in your classroom, you can hardly find a student who is not good' (teacher A). Teachers said that 'well-educated parents who cared' were behind this. Teacher N (grade 1), who seemed to produce the greatest amount of photocopies of all the teachers, told me that 'parents were very enthusiastic' about the amount of worksheets. Teacher A implied to me that parents' influence could be negative: 'they pressurize their children a lot'. Evidently, parents, given their high educational level, held high expectations for their children. Once, I talked to children who looked sad and annoyed because they had scored 9 out of 10 in a test; they told me:

> 'Our parents want 10 plus, or 10 [out of 10]; 9 is not good.' / 'Parents will not buy us gifts.' / 'I have made many mistakes. My parents will hit me' (pupils in grade 5).

Since most parents were well educated with good jobs, they would hold relevant ambitions for their children, and cultivate these in them. When I asked a boy in grade 5 what he would like to do for a living, he answered: 'My father is a doctor, my mother is a doctor, what else can I become?' Parents' influence became evident in children's writing on the school's contribution:

> -'Those who become educated from when they are small become scientists when they grow up' (Fotis, grade 2).
> -'The school offers me knowledge so that I can find easily a very good job in the future. I want this a lot, so I read a lot to acquire as much knowledge as possible' / 'School teaches me so that I can earn money' (pupils, grade 6).

High career aspirations at this tender age (six to twelve) can turn a primary school into an institution that mainly targets academic success, leaving minimal space for the development of moral, social and political aspects of education through the curriculum and the school ethos.

It is worth examining children's practical response, beyond their ambitions, to high academic emphasis. In an informal discussion I had with the pupils of grade 6, many of them expressed how they felt tired: 'teachers keep us from break to continue the lesson'. However, my observations at breaktime suggested that there were many pupils of different grades who willingly gave up their free time for reading and doing exercises. The pupils in grades 1 and 2 were especially eager to write at breaktime, despite their teachers' requests to go and play. I heard teacher E (grade 2) strongly reprimanding one of her best students:

> 'Stop writing the exercises at breaktime, you just want to finish before your classmates; this is so *selfish* of you!'

This comment introduces the discussion of pupils' morale.

## Pupils' morale

Pupils' morale is discussed with reference to their feelings and demonstrations of *competitiveness*, *respect* and *restlessness*.

### *Competitiveness*

While staying for a total of ten days in the grade 5 classroom (teacher A), I frequently witnessed incidents similar to the following:

> 'Let us see who will be examined' (teacher).
> [Almost all thirty children shout, expressing their wish to be examined. The teacher selects two children, who seem happy to be selected, whereas all the others become displeased, or even annoyed.]
> 'You will all be examined' (teacher).
> [All the children shout happily.]

I saw children typically exclaiming their disappointment when the teacher asked another child to speak. The teacher would become upset with this: 'If you don't like it, you should go to another school'. When a classmate of theirs was speaking, they wanted to speak themselves, keeping their hands raised. The teacher was annoyed again: 'why do you raise your hand? The child is speaking.' I saw children often smiling, or even laughing, when the teacher reprimanded a child or when a child made some mistake. The teacher disliked that: 'We make our criticism, though we reject our classmate'. When observing at breaktime, I often saw these children comparing their grades or their mistakes with each other; they even disputed about them. Overall, the high frequency of such incidents did not seem to allow the teacher time and energy to comment adequately on all of them; however, the teacher frequently expressed his disapproval of children's competitiveness.

Other teachers also appeared to be annoyed by children's competitiveness. Teacher L (grade 6) told me that she struggled to control pupils who always wanted to have the first word in answering any question. When observing lessons of teacher E (grade 2), I often saw her students pushing each other while queuing in front of her, so that she could correct their work before others; this would make her angry, but children did not seem willing to change. I often heard the Head, in RE classes, scolding children: 'we want you to become human, we don't care whether you will become doctors or lawyers'. I thought that if teachers did not react against students' competitiveness, the situation might escalate. I thought that contributory factors to competitiveness were the school's high academic emphasis and the parental pressures.

***Respect***

Teachers often talked to each other and me about the children's lack of manners:

> 'You give these children one word of criticism, and they answer back with fifty words. They have too much confidence' (teacher A, grade 5).
> 'A child reprimanded me for not using an adjective correctly' (Teacher N, grade 1).

Teachers E, M, N and A, who had previously worked in lower-class schools told me that children in lower class areas were more respectful. Teacher N explained:

> 'I have worked twenty years in different schools and I can compare; there are great differences on the basis of social class. Children in working-class schools do not have many experiences and representations of the world, and the teacher and the school look important and respectable to them, even if these children belong to neighbourhood 'mafias''.

It should be remembered that teachers in school B also identified such differences in terms of social class. Change over time was another factor that was suggested:

> 'When I was a student in this school *ten years ago*, children were much more respectful; we did not dare answer the teacher back like these children. They speak rudely to you and also make fun of you' (assistant English teacher).

Teacher E (grade 2), who had worked in this school for eight years, also referred to the changing times, mentioning changes in family life:

> 'Some years ago, I had such a nice time at school that I did not want to leave after work; children were much nicer than today. I attribute these increased difficulties in children's behaviour to the fact that parents work more and more hours and don't spend time with their children; they are either absent at work or feel too tired. Me, when I was little, I had my mum, who, whenever I said a bad word, she told me not to say it. These children do not have anything like that.'

These points make sense in the context of modern urban settings; the problem is how weak or strong the teacher is when confronting such adversities stemming from the social context.

When observing classes, I saw teachers directly asking children to behave themselves; this relates to their own sense of values and behaviour. I often heard teacher E (grade 2) telling pupils that it was important, first, that they behaved themselves, and, secondly, that they performed well. She often told me that she felt tired and weak: 'I've taught them to read and write, but I cannot teach them manners' – notably, she was most commonly very polite inside

and outside the classroom. I was interested to see that, when her pupils wrote for me what the school offered to them, about one third of them referred to good behaviour: 'at school I learn manners, as well as to read and write words' (Mihalis). Teacher A (grade 5) did not appear to mention, to me or to students or teachers, his intention to make his students behave better, but he appeared to be always very polite (even when students became very undisciplined) as well as very helpful to them when this was needed. When I asked his pupils to write about the school's contribution, they too referred to good behaviour: 'the school offers me knowledge, education in manners, friendship and contact with teachers' (Foteini). Clearly, it is not only what teachers say that counts, but also, or mostly, how teachers behave.

***Restlessness***

When observing classes, I noticed that many children could not sit on their chair for more than a few minutes; this appeared to be annoying for those who sat behind the children who would get up often, as well as for teachers. I also noted that most children, when sitting down, would restlessly make movements with their pens, pencils, rubbers, and other pieces of stationery, which they appeared to have in abundance in their bags. I was interested to note that, at the same time, they would attend to the lesson, as their responses to teachers' questions indicated. However, their movements appeared to annoy teachers. Very often, teacher E (grade 6) ordered students to put everything away in their bags so that they would stop moving. One day, the Head scolded the grade 5 pupils strongly:

> 'While I am speaking, someone is opening a pencil case, someone else is sharpening a pencil, someone else is painting on the desk, someone else is marking a book... Leave these things alone. It's very annoying that you can never stay still for a moment. When you are with someone, you have to look at his face.'

I thought that the lack of space in the classrooms and the playground was a reason why children moved restlessly during lessons: children simply lacked space to release their energy. Teacher M (grade 3), who had taught in suburban, more spacious areas of Athens, related the restlessness of the students to lack of space generally in their lives in urban areas:

> 'In suburban schools, there were big playgrounds and other places for playing, such as a little forest, as well as a sense of the neighbourhood. Children could work off their energy quite well, and they were quiet in class. Where can these city children relax?'

This is worth considering in the context of urban estates, where children live in apartments. Children themselves complained about the lack of space when writing about their school:

> 'I wish my school had some playground' (Danai, grade 2).
> 'I wish there were a bigger yard to play comfortably' (Katerina, grade 6)
> 'What games can you play in this yard?' (Vasilis, grade 6)

Apart from lack of space, I thought that another reason for children's restlessness could be the emphasis attached to their academic success; this may have made them feel stressed, even if they often expressed satisfaction with their successful performance. The lack of space and

freedom for games can be related not only to stress and restlessness; children were also deprived of the joy of playing with peers, as well as of the sense of developing as a group member.

**Classroom Discipline**

Teachers, when speaking together and with me, mentioned problems with children's lack of discipline and misbehaviour at class time. Teachers often called the Head to help solve these issues; once I saw three pupils in grade 4, who were famous for being undisciplined, take the teacher to the Head to denounce his behaviour. Teachers, as illustrated above, largely related children's misbehaviour and lack of discipline to their morale and upbringing. Another reason I would suggest is that students appeared to know a lot and to understand quickly; thus, they easily became bored in lessons, and thus naughty. A method used by teacher A (grade 5) to bring disruptive students back was to ask the children difficult questions; I was impressed to note that children could answer back quickly and correctly, demonstrating their understanding.

In contrast to schools A and B, I witnessed very few incidents of teachers hitting children. As teacher L (grade 6) said, this was not a typical tactic of parents; the common presence of parents at school made teachers hesitate to employ such methods, as a teacher with many disruptive children (grade 4) also implied in a teachers' meeting. However, teachers could not always keep their temper; I often heard teachers E and H asking children to 'shut up'; these teachers confided in me that even some hitting occurred in the case of very aggressive children, usually with the consensus of parents. I noted that a method commonly used was to send parents a notice, explaining that their child did not behave well; this typically made children quieter. My observations suggested that a the most common method of imposing order was to make use of children's craving for high grades:

> 'You will see your grades after a while and you will blame me' / 'Two grades off' (teacher A, grade 5, speaking to children who misbehaved).

I noted that children became quiet after such comments. Clearly, the use of assessment to tackle misbehaviour and to impose discipline worked successfully in a school with great academic emphasis. Assessment appeared to influence pedagogy as well.

**Pedagogy**

When observing classes, I often heard teachers warning children that they would be tested; teachers, knowing that children and parents wanted high grades, sought, in this way, to make children learn a lesson well or revise a set of lessons. My observations at most grades suggested that children did not oppose to being tested; by contrast, they often looked excited, even enthusiastic, probably because they typically performed well and enjoyed feelings of success. I also noted that when they did not perform as well as they desired, they would beg for more tests.

As to teaching methods, I saw that in most classrooms, desks were organised in three lines, one behind each other, while whole-class teaching was mostly used. I thought that the number of the children (thirty per classroom) and the lack of space in classrooms formed a major obstacle to group-centred teaching. Children's lack of discipline and competitiveness, as discussed above, were additional obstacles. Teachers E and L, who had organised the desks in a relatively group-centred way, did not implement groupwork, explaining to me that children would fight, while time was also pressing. When visiting the school later in the year, I realised that teacher E had now re-organised the desks in a teacher-centred way; she told me:

> 'They were talking endlessly; I was going home exhausted. I arranged the desks in lines to reduce murmuring. Only under different circumstances, with more mature children, could I work differently.'

As to dialogue in class, teacher A (grade 5) told me that children could not hold a proper discussion, because they all wanted to speak their views without letting the others speak. I could see this when observing classes there, as well as in other classrooms. Teacher E (grade 2) also mentioned that children wanted to tell their own stories all the time, so she often skipped lessons with discussions; I thought that this problem also had to do with the children's age. Teacher A suggested that children in all the schools where he had taught (in countryside and in Athens) could not discuss properly; I thought, though, that the competitiveness of children at this school exacerbated the situation.

I thought that teacher N (grade 1), who had also organised the desks in a group-centred way, was the only one who managed to work in this direction. She told me that what she implemented was not groupwork but the 'teaching-one-other' method:

> 'Each child helps the other at spelling or counting or drawing. In this way, they learn to co-operate. Moreover, what may be very difficult for you to explain to a child, the child can easily understand from another child, because children think in similar ways. What you should pay attention to is that some children may feel inferior when being helped.'

While observing classes of this teacher, I often saw children quietly helping each other with writing. Sometimes, they appeared to talk a little off-task, but the teacher could quickly bring them back by calling the attention of all pupils to something which she would present or ask. I also saw her frequently encouraging children to work co-operatively. For example, when a child made a mistake and another child suggested the correct version, which the first child doubted, the teacher interfered, gently saying to the child who was wrong: 'he is your friend; does he lie to you? Listen to him.' I thought that, since these pupils were in their first year at school, collaborative methods, skills and attitudes could be developed. However, there were many difficulties already, as the teacher told me:

> 'Children are little Judases, they betray each other very easily; however, if they practise cooperating with each other and get used to it, they may develop a more collaborative spirit.'

I saw this teacher trying to control the tendency of children to distinguish themselves. For example, when a child called out an answer without respecting his classmates who had raised their hand to answer, the teacher interfered:

> -'Did he ask for permission?' (teacher, asking all pupils).
> -'No' (children)
> -'Say you are sorry, Aris, because you took their turn' (teacher speaking softly but steadily).
> -'I'm sorry' (the child says quietly).

The other teachers said that the pupils of this teacher were generally quieter than those of other grades. Testing the validity of such comparisons is complex, and it is not certain whether it was the children's or the teacher's characteristics that allowed the development of collaborative efforts; possibly, it was a combination of both of them.

The next unit moves the discussion from relationships to the extra-curricular activities developed at this school.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are addressed as forming an important feature of the image of this school. The school, due to the reputation it appeared to have and the financial status of the pupils, could have access to a range of *cultural events* and other *opportunities* that could promote students' moral and social development.

### Cultural Activities

I was told that pupils were taken to the children's theatre about once in two months; notably, the economic status of the children allowed the school to take them to plays which required expensive tickets, unlike School B. Moreover, three out of six teachers participated in museum education programmes; they told me that the school's reputation largely enabled this participation, as well the access of students to these programmes, and to other exhibitions.

### 'School Life' Teaching Period

The teaching period on 'School Life', which is scheduled for extra-curricular activities at grades 5 and 6 (see chapter three), was not taught at Schools A and B. At this school, teacher A (grade 5) told me that it had been abolished. By contrast, teacher L (grade 6) dedicated a teaching period each week to 'School Life', stressing that it was 'very important'. Clearly, different teachers acted differently. My observations of 'School Life' in grade 6 suggested that it concerned various activities: children might present and discuss work of literature, or visit museums nearby, or watch a film, or invite professionals (e.g. an author or an academic) to talk about their work.

It is worth considering children's response to different uses of this hour. I noted that when the teacher showed children Chaplin's 'Modern Times', and asked them to notice the social dimensions of the film, after they had analysed a relevant text, children were indifferent, longing to go to play. This can be partly justified with reference to the fact that, as explained above, these children did not have much time and space to play inside and outside school. However, it is notable that, when an executive of the Athens stock market came to speak about his work, their teacher told me that children were highly absorbed, asking many questions and demonstrating a good command of stock market terminology. As to the case of the visit of a writer of children's books that I observed, children did not seem very interested; they looked more interested when they asked the writer questions of a financial nature, such as whether he would change his job for a more profitable one. Both their teacher and I thought that children's interest in money had to do with parental influences. A problem was that the high academic emphasis of the school did not appear to leave time so that children could articulate, reflect on, and discuss their values with teachers and each other. I thought that what could help towards this end was the fact that some religious instruction, as described below, appeared to pay attention to children's values.

## RELIGION

Education in religion is presented with reference to *religious activities* and the *teaching of RE.*

### Religious Activities

Religious activities in this school consisted not only of those prescribed by law (1566/1985), but of charity activities as well.

#### *Morning Prayer*

Each morning, I saw the children lining up, in the presence of the Head and the teachers, to say the morning prayer. Order and discipline were well kept by teachers.

#### *Charity*

> 'We have a custom in this school of offering some money to people in need, for example, to people who suffer in the Kosovo war or in earthquakes. I am in my warm duvet and there are children outside who suffer' (Head to the children, before Christmas).

I saw the Head repeatedly going to classrooms to speak like that. That year, money was raised for children affected by the Kosovo war. After Christmas, a thanksgiving letter from the Serbian Church was displayed at the entrance, and the Head told children that it would be a better idea, at Easter time, to send help in the form of cans of milk instead of money; she told

me that this could make children's contribution more personal. Children appeared to be content with participating in charity activities, possibly because they did something themselves to help others. I heard the Head, the teachers and the priest at the church opposite (see next sections) often telling children that Christmas was not, and should not be, only shopping and fun. I thought that children appeared touched by these messages, not only because they seemed to quietly attend to such comments, or because they looked happy to donate money. More importantly, when I asked the pupils in grade 5 to write what Christmas meant to them, the vast majority wrote about those in need, often making religious references:

> 'I'm sorry for the people who are very poor and expect that their fortune may change but it never does; if I were Christ, I would invite them into a house, give them clean clothes and food so that they could rejoice at Christmas' (Kosmas).
> 'When I offer some food or clothes, I feel that I have sent pain and unhappiness away for a while and that I gave some happiness and joy to people' (Aggelos).

I asked younger children, in grade 2, to write a similar essay; their teacher had previously devoted a whole hour to the religious and commercial dimensions of Christmas. About half of her pupils, despite being only seven years old, seemed to have become sensitised:

> 'I wish Christmas will be good not only for me, but also for other kids' (Sevos).
> 'I think of Mother Mary feeling tired on the donkey and giving birth to Christ in a cave. How were those years, now we have got everything! At Christmas everything is glamorous...is it really like that? I wish all people would be fine' (Thanos).
> 'I wish that this year as well Little Christ will be born in the soul of all people and will bring love and kindness between us and send away every war and misfortune' (Petros).

These pieces of writing are cited as indicating that children can think sensitively about people in need in cases when teachers attempt to give relevant stimulation.

***Attendance at Church***

> 'Opposite the school, a magnificent cathedral lies' (Panagiotis, grade 2).

The school was opposite a historic Athens cathedral, whose bells rang the time hourly. I noticed that many children made the sign of the cross when hearing the bell; at class time, I saw more than half of the children doing so, possibly imitating each other to some extent. When I asked some girls of grade 5 why they did so, they replied, surprised: 'why shouldn't we?'. They added that they were used to doing so, as they had been hearing the bell for years; they said that neither the teachers nor their parents had suggested it. Possibly, the closeness of a beautiful cathedral itself could influence children.

The school took pupils to the church once a month, more often than was the case at school B. The closeness to church, and the Head's religious background (she was a theologian as well) could account for this; teachers did not appear to disapprove of it either.

When observing the church service that children attended before Christmas, I could see that though the children marvelled at the icons and the frescos,[1] they were very noisy. Teachers appeared to be embarrassed, and annoyed with the noise. The Gym teacher told me:

> 'We took children to church for half of the service, otherwise they would turn the church upside down completely'.

I thought that one reason for children's misbehaviour was that the language of the services (ancient Greek) was incomprehensible to them; another was that they knew very little about what went on there. Teacher E mentioned another reason, having to do with how respectfully families considered religion:

> 'Of my thirty pupils, none comes from a religious family. One child asked me: 'Shall I take my sandwich to church?

The Head was not so sure who was to blame. When reprimanding the children later, she said:

> 'It was such a shame... Are you are getting worse as you grow up? It is the responsibility of the school, and of your family'.

I thought that children were tired of church, because they were taken there often, as was the case with many students at school A. In a chat I had with a big group of boys in grades 5 and 6, I tried to elicit their views; I was impressed to hear that they liked the church, particularly the decoration, the chanting and one priest whom they had contact with (as explained later). Even very undisciplined children did not express dislike for the church. They told me simply: 'we are always very noisy'.

Children's contact with a priest was encouraged by the Head, who taught RE at grades 5 and 6. She sometimes took these pupils to Father John, a priest at this church, so that he would talk to them about church and God, inside church and not at school. The priest, who was a young theology graduate with a very friendly and calm attitude, sought to make children feel comfortable and familiar with him[2]:

> 'I am very glad to be with you; don't feel embarrassed with me. I had very nice co-operation with children in grade 6 last year. I want you to know that I was also a pupil like you and I had the obligations that you have now. I am not someone who comes from heaven.'

He even mentioned children's being noisy in church in a friendly way:

> 'Here at church, we like you children to be around. I like noise which means liveliness.'

The priest tried to give short and simple explanations about Church symbols and representations. He often repeated: 'nothing is placed in the Church accidentally; everything has got a meaning'. These are two examples:

> ~ 'Kiriaki [the name of Sunday in Greek] comes from 'Kirios', the Lord, to whom the day is dedicated.'

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[1] in these respects, this cathedral is highly distinguished among others in Athens.
[2] The Orthodox priests look different in that they always wear a black frock; at service time they wear vestments over it.

> ~ ... Children seem to become more curious. A child points out a snake in an icon of the cross. 'The snake has some meaning, the evil. The Cross is the Church and around it are the visible and invisible enemies of the Church.'

Children seemed to attend to the priest with great interest and curiosity; many of them also expressed to me their liking for him.

Later in the year, after many incidents of children's being noisy during services, the priest organised a liturgy especially for pupils of grade 5 and 6, which I observed too. Before it, he explained for fifteen minutes the basic parts of the liturgy, also distributing a relevant photocopy. A different priest conducted the liturgy, performing all the rituals on a table in front of the children (nothing was done inside the Temple, as happens in Orthodox rituals) so that everything would be visible. Throughout the liturgy, he explained to children most of the sayings, the symbols and the procedures. Children looked much more respectful and interested than any other time before. Through such initiatives, an established activity like church attendance can become less incomprehensible to children. It might even become more related to spiritual life. Children's contact with religion is further explored in the discussion of the teaching of RE.

**RE subject**

RE teaching at grades 5 and 6 was done by the Head, who also held a theology degree. Though, as she told me, she willingly took these hours over from the classroom teachers, she did not seem to be very punctual. I could see that she was often late for class, or asked teachers to occupy the children for a while; during my fieldwork, I often did the teaching in her place. She would tell both me and her students that she was too busy, which made the RE teaching often fall behind.

Unlike other teachers, she did not seem to rely a lot on the textbook, possibly because she could draw from her educational background and experience. She told me:

> 'I don't do anything very good in teaching. It's important that we start from children's experiences.'

She appeared to do so in all classes that I observed of her. These are some examples:

> 'The basic teaching and so human characteristic of Christianity is the message of love. Let us transfer it into school practice. Did he push you? Don't push him... People in the past used to say 'don't kill', whereas Christ said, 'don't even think anything bad about your fellowman.' What about you now? Let's take your life here in school. Now your classmate will say the lesson, and you think: oh, may he say something wrong, or may the teacher scold him... You may not directly do anything against your classmate, but you think in a bad way about him...'

These words pointed to the problems in children's relationships at school, especially their competitiveness. Clearly, the Head, who had been in this school for more than ten years, knew these problems well.

The Head also related RE teaching to the charity work of the school, possibly seeking to promote it:

> 'Helping some people in need means a lot, because we keep a very important order of God, to 'love the fellowman, as we love ourselves' ... You'll say, one day, 'I won't buy something from school with my pocket money, but I'll donate it.' I don't want you to offer 20p, what can you buy with these, only chewing gum, and poor children do not need any chewing gum, what can they do with it? They wish they had some bread.'

The Head also attempted to present basic knowledge about saints and the foundations of Christian Church; she did not forget to relate these elements to children's life:

> 'Christ came to earth to give help and guidance, and he left some people, the Apostles, to carry on his work. Stefanos, the first martyr, did so. When people were throwing stones at him, he did not say 'My God, throw stones at them'. Instead, he said: 'God, forgive them.' Like him, you should try to forgive. The martyrs were people like us. I mean that you as well, if you try, for example, to be wise, you also become martyrs. If you try to fast or to help others, you are martyrs. Martyrs are not only those who shed blood, but those who show with their behaviour that they are Christians.'

The last words indicate an effort of hers to move from knowledge presentation to educating Christians. I also heard the Head attempting to initiate children into the meaning and practice of repentance:

> 'In the evening when I go to bed, I should make self-criticism and see what my mistakes are, and feel sorry for them. It is important that I see my mistakes, recognise them, correct them and have love for others so as to apologise to them. Repentance is to understand what is my mistake and to apologise for it. I rise and fall; that's the life of man. If your robe gets a little torn, do you throw it away? No, you repair it; similarly, you repent to correct things.'

Though she evidently sought to nurture children in the Christian faith, I did not distinguish a preaching tone in her teaching, as was the case with teachers at school A. She typically spoke in an expressive and lively tone, while something in it showed that she believed in her words. Perhaps what was mostly significant was her efforts to relate RE contents to students' lives, not only because this could arouse children's interest, but also because, as discussed in chapter two, Christianity is, beyond any dogmas that it includes, a moral way of living with others. A problem was that her teaching left no time for discussion of children's ideas and queries. I noticed that she always spoke quickly, and even when she asked questions, she immediately answered them herself.

As regards students' response to the Head's teaching, their questionnaire responses indicated that they did not generally think RE to be important. The lack of regular teaching was a basic reason:

> 'RE is of less importance, because it's not presented to us properly; we pass over the lessons very quickly and we don't learn anything well' (Konstantinos, grade 6).

The lack of assessment, especially in the context of this school, was another reason:

> 'RE is not that important, since we are not assessed' (Thanos, grade 5).

This view shows that assessment impacts greatly on the status of a subject. Further to this, I should note that, while observing classes, I never saw the Head examining children in RE, as teachers did in other subjects. She only asked questions while presenting the new lessons, mostly seeking to introduce new points. From some informal discussions I had with her, it emerged that she saw RE in a more personal way; as shown above, she attempted to educate children in Christian moral values; thus, she probably sought to leave RE out of the assessment tensions of the school. I was interested to hear that she marked all children with 10 out of 10 for the first term, though she did not appear to examine them, beyond a test in each term that she typically warned them about. In these circumstances, students might feel that RE was a subject where they would get a high grade anyway. Another stated reason for the devaluation of RE was its lack of relevance to future education, exams and career aspirations:

> 'It is a rare subject, you don't meet it anywhere.' / 'I don't need RE at work.' / 'You cannot do any job with it, unless you want to become a monk or a priest' (pupils in grade 6).

Pupils may have followed this way of thinking under the influence of career-orientated parents.

An initiative of the Head was, as said above, to take children to meetings, lasting about an hour, with a priest in the church opposite the school. When observing such meetings, I saw that the priest sought to familiarise children with basic religious and church events, sometimes mentioning points from the textbook lessons. He tried to talk simply and to attract children's interest:

> -'Each of you has got a name, haven't you?' (Priest - children nod) 'What's the meaning of it?' [Children don't seem to know.]
> -'We have a name so that people can call us' (child)
> -'That's true. Beyond that, each of us has got the name of a saint. In fact, each saint comes from us. Saints have been human like us. They had their own interests, a job to do; some of them had their own family, too. They became martyrs because they gave evidence by their lives that they were Christians. Martyrdom means: I am Christian and I have these virtues, which I show and develop in relationship to my family and the others. The martyrs taught us with their example. The question is: can we, by our life, become saints?' (Priest)
> [Children seem more interested now]
> -'Yes' (child).
> -'It is true, we can; we should just try to be closer to God and talk to Him' (Priest).

I was interested to note, when the Head had to teach children about the liturgy, and especially about Holy Communion, that she asked the priest to do that – she hinted to me that she might make mistakes, despite her background. Many children usually expressed to me their pleasure after a meeting with Father John. It is worth citing this questionnaire response:

> 'RE is boring but now that we go to church and Father John speaks to us, it is lovely' (Ioanna, grade 6).

This shows how much the person who teaches RE can do in favour, or at the expense, of the contribution and the status of the subject.

Given that the RE subject encountered problems as described above, the values embedded in it could be promoted by other, more implicit means. For example, before Christmas, the Head, teacher E, and I, constructed a small paper cave with a Nativity icon in the middle and candles around; it was sought to suggest that Christmas does not have material glamour only, as would be indicated by placing a stunning Christmas tree at the school entrance (as happened in the past).

The next section moves from religion to politics, also showing that religious and moral instruction can be conducted in politically coloured ways.

## POLITICS

The presence of politics in this school is discussed with reference to pupils' and teachers' *discussing politics*, as well as to the *SCE* subject.

### Speaking Politically

I never heard teachers discussing political issues in the breaktime, even when a teacher strike was on, or mention to each other that they dealt with such issues in class time. I thought that the frequent presence of parents at school, as well as its reputation, kept teachers from expressing any political views that might displease someone. Moreover, when observing the school celebration of 17th November, when the Greeks honour the rebellion of university students (in 1974) against the totalitarian regime that was dominant then, I realised that less than one third of the pupils and very few parents were present. Teachers told me that students and parents were too bored to come; I also thought that the political ideas of the celebration might not be agreeable to some parents. Some teachers said that more attention was paid to national celebrations, because they were 'national.' However, my observation of a school national celebration showed that participation in this was also small: hardly half of the pupils and very few parents came. Possibly, the national celebrations did not touch children or parents. Neither did the school appear to emphasise national ideals.

However, in national and political terms, the school practice was not as 'neutral' as I first thought. The Head, whom I never heard speaking politically in the staffroom (possibly due to her position), became explicitly political in a RE class I observed:

> -'What is the main characteristic of Christianity?' (Head)
> -'Love' (some children).
> -'Why is love good?'
> [Children seem confused.]
> -'Without God and love, there are wars. What is happening these days? What are we all talking about?' (Head)
> -'It is the 17th November anniversary' (children)

> -'Yes, but there are also wars today. Clinton is coming. I won't tell you whether he is right or not, I don't want to pass such messages to you; it is you that will judge. The Americans did not think whether they would make war, whether children or old people would die. Anyway... The gist of Christianity is the message of love.'

Possibly, the Head, as she did in previous cases, sought to relate Christianity to real life. She might not seek to speak politically, as was also implied in her words; nevertheless, she did speak politically by using explicit arguments, and she admitted doing so.

The rest of the teachers as well were not as neutral as I first thought. On asking teachers of A (grade 5) and L (grade 6) whether they discussed politics in class they answered:

> 'I avoid *party* politics' (teacher A).
> 'You cannot avoid politics completely. History, for example, has so many socio-political dimensions that you cannot remain detached from' (teacher E).

Thus, the point is not whether teachers speak politically, but when, why and how they do so.

Children themselves could be very political, in their own ways. When the President of United States, Bill Clinton, visited Athens in November 1999, the centre of Athens - where the school was located – was closed to traffic for security reasons; thus, it was announced that the school had to be closed for one day.[3] The students started shouting excitedly the name of the American president, happy that they would have a day off. I thought that the holiday made them happy; I had not considered in what ways they might think of the American President. One or two days later, when the English teacher asked pupils in grades 5 and 6 to write a paragraph on the week's news, many children condemned the US president:

> 'Dear Mr President Clinton, get out of our country because you are evil and you continuously destroy the countries and you bring war; help the poor instead.' (Giorgos, grade 5).
> 'President Bill Clinton is going to go to Greece. Most people think he's a criminal' (pupil, grade 6).
> 'This is Bill and Monica [Lewinski]' (legend to a rude sketch).

It appears that children have formed strong views about socio-political matters, which can be displayed when prompted. Beyond this, I thought that children's negative feelings about US imperialistic politics may have developed in relation to a school activity, that of raising money for children at Kosovo, as well as by comments such as those above by the Head. Another notable point is that the English teacher and the teachers for grades 5 and 6 placed the above pieces of writing on the classroom noticeboards and anyone could read them.

**SCE subject**

Teacher L (grade 6) told me that she considered the SCE subject very important; she even asked students to keep a notebook for it, where they would write some paragraphs as answers to open questions from the textbook for homework. However, in practice, she was

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[3] Many riots happened that day in central Athens, because many Greeks disapproved of the US involvement in Kosovo, as Serbians historically have strong ties to the Greek nation.

frequently sorry to have to ask me not to observe her teaching, because she would do it "in five minutes", as she had to continue teaching other subjects such as Physics, Mathematics and Greek. While observing classes there, I saw that she combined whole-class teaching with discussions.

The majority of her pupils, as indicated in their questionnaire answers, found the SCE subject boring and unimportant. The content of the curriculum and textbook was one reason:

> 'I know most of these things' (Konstantinos).
> 'It says things that we discuss in History' (Haralampos).

However, I had observed their teacher commonly trying to connect the content to their experiences, and go beyond the textbook. Thus, I thought that there were other, more important reasons. One was that children might not like politics generally, as implied by questionnaire responses:

> 'SCE gives you information about the laws and the state and it is very boring' (Babis).
> 'I'm not interested in these things' (Sotiris).

Career aspirations, which should be seen in relationship to the context of this school, offered another reason for devaluing SCE; for example:

> 'The subject that I regard as least important is SCE because it is not taught at secondary school' (Yiannis).
> 'It will be of no use in the future' (anonymous).

Notably, the teacher of these students told me that they became extremely interested in SCE when she asked them to learn their lesson well, implying that she would test them. She later told me that they did excellently in the test, in which they became very interested; she also expressed to me her disapproval of her students' intense pursuit of high grades, while her tone suggested that she could not easily change this.

## OVERVIEW

High academic emphasis and success appeared to be a very distinctive feature of this school, being promoted by the school's reputation, and the teachers' educational level, as well as the high financial and educational aspirations of parents and children. Academic pressure operated at the expense of timetabled moral, social and citizenship education, also leaving little time for discussions on values. It also appeared to harm the ethos of the classrooms and the whole school in that children associated school with preparation for further education and career advancement, while, in this context, they became very competitive. However, teachers seemed to realise this and to attempt to counteract it; it was fortunate, for example, that they would briefly interrupt their lesson to explain why something in children's behaviour was wrong. Though they often expressed their weakness in alleviating the tensions, these might escalate if teachers did not react. The competitive context did not either mean that teachers left children's

moral sensitivities undeveloped; charity work and teaching relevant to this seemed to be important features of the school, greatly promoted by the personal involvement of the Head. The Head also tried to work on pupils' values and behaviour through religious teaching, which focused on their experiences. Though these efforts, as well as the contribution of the priest at the church opposite the school, are noticeable, their impact on children could not be easily estimated, especially given the low status that was assigned to RE in this school.

# CHAPTER EIGHT
# SCHOOL D

This chapter presents the findings of the fourth case study, which I conducted in a school in central Athens; students were said by the teachers to come from 'different social classes' or from 'generally middle social classes'; thus, the school was thought to be predominantly middle-class.

## THE CONTEXT

### The School

> 'Our school hasn't got luxuries such as gyms or swimming pools. It is the oldest in Athens and the loveliest one. It's not very big' (Antonia, grade 5).

This state school was located in Plaka, the picturesque old city of Athens, and had a view of the Parthenon, that was within ten minutes' walk. The school was one of the oldest in Athens, housed in a neo-classical building made of marble and wood, with a small playground. The school attracted pupils whose parents usually worked near the school; there were minority children as well, mainly from Albania. The school had six teachers, one for each grade; each class had between fifteen to twenty pupils. As teachers said, the small number of children and teachers, the fact that most teachers had worked there for about ten years, as well as the picturesque building and neighbourhood, made the school much more 'family-like' than other Athens schools. Teacher V compared it with a big inner-city school where she had previously worked:

> 'There were many teachers, many pupils and a huge playground, next to a highroad; we could sense ourselves only as individuals and not as members of a group.'

How the small size related to the school and classroom ethos is further explored below.

### The Head and the Teachers

The Head had done postgraduate studies in education and also held a theology degree; he taught RE and Aesthetic Education at grades 5 and 6. Having many artistic interests, he had painted the walls of the school in beautiful colours with children's help. The other teachers were also well educated; they had received two years' further education training, and some of them held a second university degree; however, as explained below, they did not exercise high academic pressure on their pupils. All six classroom teachers had worked in this school for at least eight years, and my sitting with them in the staffroom suggested that they were very comfortable with each other,

having much fun and long chats together. 'We are very family-like here; you don't find this in other schools', they all told me.

## RELATIONSHIPS

This section discusses the relationships developed between *teachers and parents*, and *teachers and pupils*, as well as *among pupils*. Though *teacher-pupil relationships* appeared to vary from classroom to classroom, there was not great variance as regards *academic emphasis*, *pedagogy* and *discipline*.

### Teachers and Parents

Sitting with teachers at breaktime suggested that they often discussed children's behavioural and family problems, which they seemed to know well, possibly because the number of pupils was small, as well as because teachers had worked there for years. I often heard teachers assigning responsibilities to parents for children's problems, while they could become judgmental too. The lack of appreciation of teachers for many parents increased when the newly elected parents' committee sought to become more active in the school. The Head told me:

> 'During all the years I have worked, it's always the same problem with parents. They do not know that their intervention should have limits; they think that they can take a tool and rebuild the school. Moreover, those who become active are idle people who do not have much to do.'

Beyond this, there were incidents that often caused tension. For example, teacher X told me about a pupil of hers who could not co-operate with his classmates during classes and breaktime; I often saw him being in tension with other children. The teacher told me that she asked to see the boy's mother, who did not seem to recognise the problems of her son and did not want to listen to the teacher's view. Then, the teacher said directly to the mother that her child was 'immature', which, as the teacher herself told me, made the mother feel insulted and speak ill of the teacher to other parents. No matter what extremes by the mother or the teacher this incident involved, the point is that it resulted in unfriendliness. While listening in the staffroom, I sometimes had the impression that teachers did not like parents at all; moreover, they did not seem to do anything to change the picture. A possible consequence could be that parents did not feel teachers as partners in the education of their children, which could in turn mean that they might not support the efforts of teachers in the area of moral, social and citizenship education. This could cause a vicious circle, with negative feelings on both sides, which could mar teacher-pupil relationships. Before referring to them, it is illuminating to discuss the extent of academic emphasis at this school.

**Academic Emphasis**

The teachers were well educated, but high academic emphasis did not appear to be their ideal of schooling. Staying at the school for six weeks, I realised that the majority of teachers did not impose more than one or two tests per term for each subject. Moreover, I rarely saw them preparing worksheets and photocopies, or spending breaktime discussing teaching and learning, or correcting students' work, or preparing for the following lesson. I observed that they were more concerned about children's family and behaviour problems, which they seemed to know well, than about their academic progress. I also had the sense that they enjoyed talking together, perhaps because they had all worked there for about ten years and were very familiar with each other. I was also impressed to note that the break often lasted five or ten minutes longer than prescribed by law (MoE, 1992), especially when teachers had a lively talk together. Not being familiar with such break extensions, on one of my first days there I wondered aloud why the bell did not ring; then the teachers gaily explained to me: 'we're a little relaxed in this school!' I often heard them say: 'let the break last a little longer!' This left pupils more free time to enjoy talking and playing together. The fact that school offered to them not only learning but also the joys of playing with peers, was also shown by some writing of grade 6 pupils on what the school offers for them:

> 'My school offers me knowledge, pleasure and playing with my friends and feeling carefree' (Giorgos).
>
> 'My school offers me education and games' (Anna).

When observing at breaktime, I did not see children discussing lessons or grades or preparing for the following lesson; instead, they played a lot, while the Gym teacher sometimes helped them play volleyball. Thus, children could value school for receiving both academic preparation and joy, which are fundamental for their personal development.

**Pupil–Pupil relationships**

The small number of children in each classroom (fifteen to twenty children) was reported by most teachers to enable establishing a friendlier and more family-like atmosphere in the classroom and the school. I thought, however, that pupils' coming from different areas of Athens - they attended this school because their parents worked nearby - meant that they could not easily socialise together outside school, e.g. in the neighbourhood; this may have hindered the development of close relationships between them. I also thought the fact that the playground was small could affect pupil-pupil relationships; a boy of grade 5 wrote: 'the small playground is not enough for all the children, which makes us fight with one another'. I am not sure whether the playground was too small for the number of students (one hundred and twenty); nevertheless, more space would make them feel comfortable. It should also be considered that these were city children,

mostly living in apartments, and they needed space. Notably, the relatively small number of children and the limited space of the playground made it easy for the teacher(s) with playground duties to notice any incidents of misbehaviour (e.g. children hitting children) and interfere; thus, such problems could not go on for long.

A basic reason why teachers interfered was that they appeared to be considerate: I often heard them discussing the behaviour and family background of pupils in ways that showed that they cared for them; I also heard them frequently blaming parents for children's problems. Teacher M made a point that all teachers accepted:

'Many children have problems of behaviour because very few families live in harmony.'

This point seems increasingly valid in modern urban societies; a question is what the school can do with, and for, children coming from non-harmonious families. In the present case, teachers familiarised themselves with children's problems, which made them become more sensitive and lenient to children who needed to be supported rather than judged. During my six weeks' stay at the school, I learnt much about the family problems of many children; I am not sure whether this happened because children did indeed have many problems or because these teachers were interested in them. Teacher M talked about help from outside:

> 'There is need for school psychologists. Teachers cannot do a lot; they need specialized, professional help.'

Though this point makes sense, the need, however great, for special provision, does not mean that teachers are helpless. There remains the responsibility for teachers to handle problems in pupils' behaviour. The examples of teachers V and P, as described below, showed that teachers were not especially helpless. Moreover, the Head intervened as well. He often talked to me about children with behaviour and family problems, while I often saw him trying to ease tensions between children by imposing his authority. For example, at the morning prayer, I heard him more than once order children to stop swearing at and hitting other children, because this was unacceptable behaviour that would have negative consequences; he pointed out that teachers did not treat children badly. Generally, despite any difficulties over children's problems, teachers did not seem to resign themselves to helplessness in facing them. Possibly, the fact that the teachers did not feel helpless as regards children's problems, allowed them to face these problems more effectively.

Teachers' intervention in children's problems is evident in how they tried to tackle *competitiveness* and *racism*.

### *Competitiveness*

Though I did not hear children arguing about grades, and there were few tests in any case, I often noticed, when observing classes, incidents displaying their competitiveness. For example:

-'Miss, she doesn't know what a million is!' [Konstantinos, commenting abruptly on a female classmate].
-'Konstantinos, Miss Eirini is here and she will think that you underestimate your classmate. She knows the correct answer, she was just confused, don't hurry to characterise her' (teacher V).
-'But, Miss!' [Konstantinos shouts].
-'Konstantinos, please don't pop up like that. In this way, you insult the other person, who might have got confused' [teacher, speaking calmly]
-'Miss!!!'
-'Try to speak more calmly, Konstantinos; please, calm down (teacher, speaking calmly but steadily).

Clearly, the teacher intervened decisively when competitive feelings were expressed. Such feelings might be expressed in subtler ways; for example, when teacher V asked her pupils to write their spelling exercises, children rushed, each of them seeking to finish first. Teacher V stressed: 'I don't give prizes to the first ones!' She turned calmly to a child who always wanted to be first: 'you don't need to finish always first, you will become a stressful person'. Teacher P (grade 6) reacted more dynamically to such incidents. One day when I observed his lesson, he blamed a good student of his for being conceited and underestimating the children who were not as successful and bright as he was; I thought that such reactions by a teacher might seriously embarrass children.

***Racism***

In each classroom there were some minority children (around five), mainly from Albania. Generally, when I observed during lessons and breaktime, I did not get the impression that they were marginalized, unless they were very disruptive. However, racist attitudes and feelings were not absent. For example, one day, when I was sitting in the school yard during breaktime, a boy in grade 6 approached me and told me about an English-Croatian classmate of his: 'Miss, he is an *Albanian*!' He said so because the child was blond, as most Albanians are. When I looked at him displeased and astonished, saying that I did not find it funny, this boy and some of his classmates reassured me that it was only a joke. Staying in the playground more frequently to explore the issue further, I noticed that boys in higher grades frequently called each other 'Albanian', which would make them laugh. I could not decide how innocent or discriminatory this kind of joking was. Nonetheless, my observation of a SCE class in grade 6 (teacher P) suggested that some of the boys who spoke like that held some discriminating ideas:

> After teacher P and children discussed modern sports, they mentioned a Greek world record holder in weight lifting, who came from Northern Epirus, which politically belongs to Albania. Then, a boy said strongly, while some children seemed to agree with him:
> -'Northern Epirus people are *not genuine Greeks*.'
> -'What does genuineness mean? Does it have a guarantee like products? What's the difference between someone who lives in Northern Epirus and someone who lives in

Ioannina [a town in Greek Epirus]? Borderlines are not important. To belong to a nation, it's not necessary to have been born in a certain place' (teacher, raising his voice).
[The child who mentioned genuineness did not seem to be convinced.]
-'So, these people are Greeks' (another child)
-'Of course. If they are not Greeks, you are not Greek either but descended from Turks, because the Turks occupied Greece for four centuries. We should not talk like that about other people. What's important is how you feel, no matter where you come from. If you are touched while listening to the National Hymn, if you like your country, then you are a member of it.'

Although the teacher, as shown in the presentation of the above incident, promptly reacted and plausibly argued against racial discrimination, I observed that some children looked at him and each other in ways that indicated that they may not have been convinced. Such feelings and attitudes of children, possibly stemming from parental or other social influences, may not be easily counteracted or eliminated from their thinking and 'jokes'. Longer-term exploration and negotiation of these ideas are needed.

The extent, and the effectiveness, of teachers' intervention in pupils' relationships and problems had much to do with the relationships of teachers to pupils.

**Teacher-Pupil relationships**

As mentioned when discussing problems in pupil-pupil relationships, teachers did not seem indifferent to students' behavioural and family problems. I thought that this concern of teachers contributed to the quality of their relationships to their pupils. Another contributing factor I considered was the small number of pupils, which could facilitate their communication with their teachers. Another one was the, generally, low academic emphasis of the school, which meant that there was time for off-task communication between teachers and pupils.

Beyond such features that characterised the school as a whole, there were considerable differences among teachers, as shown in the four different examples of teachers I describe below:
-*Teacher M* (grade 1):

My observation of her teaching for two days indicated that she was well-organised, using many resources and planning exercises and activities beyond the textbook; she told me: 'I like preparing new worksheets every year, even if I have the same grade for three years'. She had also organised a classroom library, which children regularly used. She was glad to show me how attractively she had decorated her classroom with handicrafts, as well as pastel and watercolour drawings, which her students had made under her guidance. Some of her colleagues told me that she was a teacher who did her work 'very well'. However, during my observation, I noticed that she never smiled at children, and when they misbehaved or did not work properly, she was not patient enough to explain to them what was wrong with the way they behaved or worked. Instead, she

would shout at them, commonly using language that was not polite (e.g. 'I will hang you'). I thought that her abrupt manners not only failed to develop pupils' motivation, but also harmed the classroom atmosphere, as the pupils might develop negative feelings towards her. A chat I had with some of her ex-students (grade 5 at that moment) was illuminating:

> -'Teacher M called us not by our first name but our surname.'
> -'She used to throw our things out of the window.'
> -'She used to pull our hair; she is *bad*.'
> -'We had to pay so much... She made us buy a whole stationery shop to have material for the Arts lesson.'

When I sought to test these comments by implying something about them to teacher V in private, she replied: 'Teacher M is a good teacher but only as regards learning; she is a teacher without feelings'. I would not agree with the last phrase, as teacher M often talked to me with concern about the family problems of her pupils. Her commitment to good teaching could also be considered as an indication of her caring for students. The problem was that any feelings of care she might have for children did not show in her classroom presence, while her manners could be explicitly bad. I think it was also a matter of personality; as I observed her outside classroom, and as another teacher said, it was typical of her not to smile easily and to speak abruptly. Certainly, children and parents could not consider all these qualities, and might develop negative feelings and attitudes towards her, which could exacerbate the situation.

-*Teacher S* (grade 2):

My observations of lessons of teacher S suggested that, like teacher M, she appeared to be well organised in her teaching, also using resources and preparing activities beyond the textbook. Having children that were generally said to be 'difficult', I could see that she kept them disciplined in class, while she sometimes expressed tenderness and care for them. She could combine order and strictness with relaxation; I often heard her making jokes that added friendliness and ease to classroom life. An ex-student of hers wrote on the school's contribution: 'Thanks to Miss S, I learnt to read and write and say jokes'. A serious problem, as I suspected while I listened to her speaking in her lessons and the staffroom, was that her way of joking was not always very appropriate for children. As two teachers also implied to me later, teacher S often joked vulgarly, especially when teaching older pupils (e.g. at grade 6). I did not have the opportunity to explore this phenomenon further, and I did not want to discuss it more openly for the fear of causing tensions; it had not been raised by anyone else. I thought that a serious problem with vulgar jokes by a teacher was that they were contradictory to other teachers' efforts to keep children from swearing at each other.

-*Teacher V* (grade 4):

My observation of classes by teacher V, as well as her comments when interviewed, suggested that she did not emphasise academic success, though she did not neglect to examine whether children had done their reading. She explained to me:

> 'I'm not so interested in the learning aspects of schooling, as I care more for the human aspects of it. The most important thing is to have a nice atmosphere in the classroom, a sense of friendship.'

She explained why academic emphasis was not her ideal:

> 'If you deal only with the learning aspect, for example, if you care that students do all the exercises and proceed to more difficult ones, school becomes an industry where children are to work hard.'

She referred to children's progress in life as follows:

> 'If the child is psychologically well, progress also comes; no child will get lost, if someone finally wants to receive further education, he does so, more or less'.

Further discussions with this teacher showed that her view of success and happiness in life did not have to do with prestigious well-paid jobs:

> 'I remember a student of mine – she is still contacting me – who was not a good student. She was not clever, teachers did not pay attention to her, thinking that she was silly, but she was such a nice girl. She finally managed to become a nurse; now she is happily married with two kids, and seems to be better settled and happier than other 'successful' people. Do you think that the others are better than she is? And she was the 'failure' of the classroom.'

When observing her for about seven days in her classroom[1], I thought, through many incidents that I saw, that she tried to apply her principles in practice.

An example is that, after a weekend or the participation of children in an extra-curricular activity, she would ask them about their impressions, and only after a five or ten minute talk would she ask them to prepare for their lesson. She explained to me: 'for me, the most important thing is to prepare the psychological ground before teaching; though sometimes when I am tired, I have to push myself to be talkative and polite.' Moreover, as shown above, she spared time and energy to tackle children's competitiveness, which could cultivate tension in the classroom. She often made comments like this:

> 'You should be more in control of yourself about the mistakes of the others, as we are about your mistakes. You should not attack the other person because he made a mistake'.

She typically advised children calmly when they misbehaved; in more serious cases, she would raise and make stricter the tone of her voice, which would make children behave themselves. She explained:

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[1] I stayed there so long, because she was very hospitable, and I found her interest in interpersonal relationships at school relevant to my study.

> 'I become strict sometimes. It's fine to do so, it does not harm the atmosphere and teacher-pupil relationships, as long as you show children at other times that you love and respect them.'

Her aim to sustain a positive classroom ethos involved attempts to keep integrated in the classroom group a student of hers who was 'different' in that he could hardly read at the age of ten, while his parents denied the problem and did not offer him special help. She tried to help him read a few lines daily like the other children, and also encouraged him to participate in classroom discussions and in other activities such as drawing. She explained:

> 'I try to help him as much as I can and not to let him marginalize himself. It is important that the child feels accepted not only by you, but by the children as well. I tell them: 'your classmate has some problems, we should help him.' If you discuss the problem with children, they accept it; they are kind, despite being hard sometimes.'

Such efforts are important because they may ensure that children with special problems do not feel lonely or underestimated at school, while their classmates also learn to cope with them. The students of teacher V sensed their teacher's efforts to build a friendly climate, as was indicated when they wrote for me about their school's contribution:

> -'This school gives me a pleasant social life. The atmosphere is sweet and pleasant' (Stefania).

Beyond feeling a positive ethos, children seemed to receive messages on how to preserve it:

> -'At school I learn quite a lot; I am taught to treat people and my friends well' (Athina).
> -'Thanks to my teacher, I learn to love people and to behave politely. I like her a lot' (Hara).

I wondered whether teacher V would think and act in the same ways, if she worked in another school with high academic emphasis and a less family-like atmosphere. On asking her about this, she answered that she had chosen not to work at such a school, though she could find one near her home. I thought that though this teacher had the freedom of choice, other teachers with her ideals might not.

-*Teacher P* (grade 6):

During my six weeks' stay at the school, I saw teacher P, at least once every day, taking time from his break to settle problems between children, whether from his own class or not. He was especially concerned about incidents of bad treatment and injustice in their relationships. For example when he saw two boys of junior grades swearing at each other very badly, he took them into the staffroom and asked them:

> 'Why are you doing this? Whatever bad words you know and use at your home or anywhere else, you should keep them in the fridge and not repeat them here. Do we, your teachers, swear at you?'

He often discussed with his colleagues and me difficulties in pupils' behaviour. I also saw him taking time from lessons to solve such problems. When one day we entered his classroom together for a SCE class, we saw a girl crying. He asked her why, and she explained that a boy from another grade had made fun of her in front of others, calling her fat and ugly – I noted that the girl was overweight. Teacher P sent for this boy; a pupil of his asked: 'sir, aren't we having class now?' Teacher P answered: 'this is class as well, it's a lesson in behaviour.' When the boy came and the girl's report was verified, the teacher said, addressing all the children in a louder voice:

> 'What do you mean by saying 'fat'? Aren't fat people human beings? Aren't short or ugly people human? This is racism. Einstein was also very short; Hawking, the greatest physicist today, is an invalid.'

He told the boy:

> 'This time I ask you to apologise and be polite. Next time I will not ask you. Do you like this school?' [The boy is a newcomer from another school; he nods] 'If you want to attend this school, you should behave yourself.'

The child apologised and the teacher seemed to be satisfied; a less tense atmosphere also seemed to be established in the classroom. When observing classes there, I often saw the teacher suspend the lesson to discuss relevant problems; I also saw him going to another classroom, when more children from it were involved.

His values were evident not only in practice, but also in class discussions. For example:

-'Why is education important?' (teacher, asking a child who does not participate).
-'Children should be educated so as to become able to work' (child).
-'Is education only this?' (teacher)
-'It is for good behaviour as well, sir!' (child)

I was very impressed with his pupils' written answers to my question on what the school offered to them. Almost all his twenty pupils suggested that school not only offered them knowledge, but also educated them morally and socially. For example:

-'The school offers me education and education in behaviour.'
-'The school first cultivates our characters and teaches us to be sociable, and then teaches us about letters and numbers.'

Clearly, pupils were not untouched by their teacher's efforts towards justice and peace. I was interested to note, when I asked the pupils of teacher X (grade 5) to write about the school's contribution to them, that they all mentioned education in its academic sense, but only one referred to moral and social aspects of education. Notably, their teacher did not interfere, as she told me, in problems between students, although she seemed to have a good relationship with them and was typically always polite; she seemed, though, as she told me, to focus on 'doing teaching well', also imposing tests more regularly than her colleagues.

As shown in these brief and partial portrayals of four teachers, different teachers can establish different relationships with their pupils, form a different classroom ethos, and also leave different impressions on children about the role of school itself.

Another point that should be stressed is that not all these teachers seemed to have an equal impact on the school; some teachers, like V and P, seemed to have a stronger presence in it. This was due to distinct factors: they had worked there more than other teachers; they were older; many parents (as shown from some comments) seemed to appreciate them; they were very expressive and talkative with their colleagues; and they appeared to care much for children as persons, as could be noted when observing them at class time and breaktime. Thus, any qualities in their presence could become highly visible, and maybe mitigate some negative aspects of their colleagues, and finally greatly promote the quality of the whole school ethos.

Relevant to the teacher-pupil relationships and the school ethos are the issues of discipline and pedagogy.

**Discipline**

Teachers mentioned that the relatively small number of pupils in classrooms (fifteen to twenty) made it easier for them to maintain discipline and order. This was not very difficult to do, as was mentioned, in the playground as well. I was told by teachers, and could also see myself, that punishing or hitting children was not often employed; instead, teachers usually discussed with children and reprimanded them. Teachers mentioned that the fact that pupils had neither the 'air' of 'upper-class spoilt' children, nor 'the problems of lower-class children' kept discipline problems away from extremes.

**Pedagogy**

My observations of lessons suggested that a combination of whole-class teaching and discussion was largely employed. The small number of children in the classes seemed to facilitate discussions. I noted that especially in grade 5, where there were only thirteen students, children discussed freely, without raising their hand for permission to speak. Discussions were not, though, without their problems; at all classrooms, I could see children often seeking to speak their views without letting others speak. Teachers reacted to this; for example:

> 'We should listen to all the children, as we listened to you' (teacher V).
> 'You don't let him speak. He tries to say something and you shout 'sir!' This is fascism' (teacher P).

I thought that these problems related to children's competitiveness.

Some teachers (X and V) allowed children to co-operate with each other in some cases. For example:

> -'The teacher lets us co-operate with those sitting next to us. She tells us to help them *if* they need help' (pupils of teacher X, grade 5).

This could help children learn to support each other. A pupil in this classroom wrote about the school's contribution to his life: 'at school we help one another'. I also saw teacher V often letting children change places so that they could work together better. Beyond such efforts, groupwork, as an organised way of teaching, was not employed. Teacher S (grade 2), who had organised the desks in a group-centred way, said that the children's age (seven years old) made groupwork difficult: 'they are still babies, and selfishness gets in the way'. Teachers remarked on the difficulties of groupwork after the following incident.

> The pupils of grade 3 once decided to edit a classroom newspaper; because they started quarrelling and the teacher did not seem to be able to organise them, some pupils prepared newspapers by themselves on their home computers and then sold them as classroom newspapers. The teachers refused to buy the newspapers, and reprimanded the children: 'You cannot do business at school, produce and sell on your own. It should be something from all of you. All the children in the class should co-operate together and collect money for the class account' (Head & teacher P).

I thought that it was positive that teachers were not indifferent but reacted in this way. If children could not co-operate, it would harm the school atmosphere further if they started selling their products and competed about them.

In the next two sections, I move from issues of relationships, discipline and pedagogy to the extra-curricular and religious activities of the school, examining how these related to pupils' moral and social development.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities in this school concerned either visits to landmarks around the school or theatre going. The location of the school was privileged, because the Parthenon, the Ancient Agora and many museums were within walking distance; 'people around the world pay to come and see these', teachers told children. Teachers seemed to be familiar with these landmarks; notably, some teachers said about their colleagues that they were 'highly cultured'. This was also shown in that they took pupils to the theatre about once every two months; these pupils did not come from lower-class families and seemed to be able to afford the tickets. I considered that such activities could contribute to the moral and social development of children. How this can happen was introduced by teacher P, in a SCE lesson:

-'Today we will talk about culture. We say 'this person is cultured'. What is culture?' (teacher)
[Children talk about civilisation and art, giving examples.]
-'How do these help man?'
-'Culture cultivates the spirit.' / 'You learn about other things and other people' (children).
-'Yes, you learn about other experiences and other sides of things. You see another perspective and you say: 'I hadn't thought about that' (teacher P).
-'You become free' (child).
-'Exactly. This is another kind of education, beyond the school. Being human means being cultivated and civilised. For me, culture is very important. In ancient Athens, at the Dionysus theatre nearby, people often watched plays together, eating, drinking and discussing with each other.'

Such discussions were important in that they could make children appreciate and reflect on the activities that their school organised for them.

## RELIGION

Religious messages at school were offered through the established *religious activities* and the *teaching of RE.*

### Religious activities

The religious activities of the school were those established by the relevant law (1566/1985) and consisted of the *morning prayer* and *church attendance.*

#### *Morning Prayer*

Observing the morning prayer, I could see that the Head and most teachers were commonly present, while discipline and order among pupils appeared to be well kept. I was interested to note that teacher P, who declared himself to be an atheist, reprimanded students who spoke at prayer time; this suggests the view that teachers' lack of interest in religion should not be transmitted to children, who should be left free to decide on their own religious beliefs.

#### *Attendance at Church*

Teachers told me that they took children to attend the church service almost once a month in a historic Byzantine church nearby. Observing a church service soon before Christmas, I saw the priest often interrupting the service to translate some phrases into Modern Greek, and to explain basic symbols and rituals; the Head as well offered such explanations, also showing children the church books. Teachers told me that explanations were commonly given to children; I considered that this could make the Church service understandable for them. Incidents of noise did not last

long, because the Head or the priest himself would ask for silence. When the service was over, it was raining very heavily and children were kept in church; then, the priest played Christmas carols on his violin, while they all sang, smiling and appearing content.

**RE subject**

I take the examples of three teachers to show how differently the subject of RE was approached.

-*Teacher V*:

Teacher V (grade 4) thought of RE as follows:

> 'I don't see RE as a subject; it comes from my heart. I like it very much. I don't need to prepare either, because I know these things.'

As can be seen, her personal religious feelings influenced her:

> 'In the morning before coming to school, I sometimes go to some of the old churches nearby and stay there for a while; I relax and say some prayers.'

Her religious beliefs did not mean that she sought to preach to, and indoctrinate, children. While observing her classes, I saw that she talked to children simply, usually in the form of a narration, often interrupting it to ask or listen to children. She looked peaceful and deeply involved, without using a preaching tone. She referred to personal expressions of faith as well:

> 'What's a countryside chapel like? Over there it's quiet and peaceful and you feel differently. At difficult times people go there to pray; they find some peace.'
> Children remember their experiences from their villages. Then, the teacher remembers a song about these chapels and sings it to children. Children look fascinated and gently accompany her.

Beyond this incident, I observed that children generally seemed to enjoy teacher V's teaching and to listen carefully to her. When I asked them to write which subject(s) they liked best, half of them mentioned RE. For example:

> 'I like RE very much because it talks about Christ. I was very *moved* by the Parable of the Lost Son' (Spyros – emphasis added).
> 'The loveliest subject of all is RE, I cannot say exactly why' (Ilianna).

Teacher V did not seem to assess strictly to what extent children had learnt the lesson, but she did not neglect to examine them either; she told me that this could lead to marginalisation of the subject. She only asked children to 'say the lesson in their own words'; possibly, she wanted them to know some basics about Christianity.

-*Head*:

Holding a theology degree, the Head appeared to be very knowledgeable when teaching RE, enriching the lesson with historic details and information from his travels to religious sites. He often distributed photocopies and used other books as supplements to the textbook. He told me:

'A primary school teacher needs to be very knowledgeable to teach RE to children; the teacher needs to keep being educated'.

Though the quantity and quality of information seemed interesting to me, I do not know whether children shared this interest. I noted that the Head sometimes tried to relate the lesson to children's lives, but he did so for a while only. Teacher V commented on his teaching: 'His religious position regards mainly knowledge and sense of the Christian culture.' Beyond this, I considered that the main problem with the Head's teaching of RE was that he was not punctual in his teaching duties; he claimed that he was too busy, and he often asked me to teach in his place. I often heard teachers blaming him for skipping his teaching. A pupil in grade 5 told me: 'three out of ten times we do not do RE; other times, he comes late for class'. I thought that this harmed the status of RE. A pupil of grade 6 wrote in the questionnaire: 'a subject that I think as not important is RE, because it is not taught properly.'

Overall, the vast majority of the pupils in grade 6 suggested, in their questionnaire responses, that RE was among the less interesting and less important subjects. A basic reason was their feeling displeased with the Head's attitudes to assessment:

-'We don't read in RE, because he does not examine us; he checks only the exercises for homework. We study only when he orders revision of some lessons'.
-'He does not examine us, thus we are not attracted to this subject'.
-'The reason I consider RE as less important is that we are not assessed there'.

Clearly, children defined the importance of a subject by the intensity of assessment in it; they did not like to read without receiving grades, which can be explained with reference to parental and social influences. The Head, given his twenty years' experience, might have considered this.

Children also estimated RE poorly for the reason that they found it irrelevant to further education or the job market. Children's responses to questionnaire questions on which subjects they considered more and less important indicated a circular argument:

'The lesson I *like least of all* is RE, because I don't think it is of *any importance*. The *least important subject of all* is RE, because I don't think I will need it a lot... The *most important* is Maths, because whatever job you may do, you need it' (Kostas) (emphasis added).
'The subject that I *like least* is RE because it will *not be of great use*... Maths is very important because you can get a good job with it' (Maria).

These views indicate how closely interrelated are the fondness for a subject and its perceived importance in terms of further education and career advancement. Children may think in this way more in grades 5 and 6, while preparing for secondary education.

Another reason for students' not thinking highly of RE was the Christian-centred character of the subject (see chapter three), which was a problem for children who questioned Christianity:

'RE is of least importance, because it is just a fairy tale.'

'These things in RE have no importance; they happened many years ago.'

These views raise the issue of children's freedom to embrace Christianity or not. Religious freedom, which is also an essentially moral issue, is further discussed with reference to teacher P.

-*Teacher P*:

Teacher P (grade 6) often declared to me and his colleagues that he was an atheist. He asked the Head to undertake the RE teaching for his class. I noted, in a chat we had together, that it was mainly the church as an institution that he disapproved of. Another time, he explained to me that it was not exactly the case that he did not like RE; it was the prescribed confessional, Christian-centred approach to it (see chapter three) that he disagreed with:

> 'I don't like it that the book is child-centred, addressing children's experiences. Me, I don't want only to tell a story about Christ and its relation to life. Me, I am an atheist. I like RE when philosophical discussions are held, when many viewpoints are given and the child can decide by himself. I don't want to tell children what to believe in.'

Clearly, teacher P did not like the Christ-centred approach of the prescribed curriculum and textbook. He could, though, try to teach in the way he suggested, especially because, as the Head said, there was little interference in the school by the school advisor or the Ministry of Education. Perhaps, teacher P did not feel confident to teach in the way he suggested. Though the religious freedom of children has to be respected, teaching them at this age (twelve) how to choose objectively between different religions and philosophies is not simple, especially when teachers lack specialised education. This does not mean, though, that teacher P's ideas about religious freedom are not important or are entirely impracticable. He explained:

> 'I don't want to influence children; I'm a democrat. I have democracy in my family as well; my children have icons of Mother Mary above their pillows.'

This was shown in some writing by his daughter in RE (teacher P had a daughter in grade 6):

> 'Christ is the Vineyard... When one more person believes in him, one more vine of happiness is added. Our life is meaningless without faith, without knowing our Christ, our religion. Christ is everywhere within us, and when we need him, he comes to advise us' (Anna).

When I told her father about this, he explained: 'I have my beliefs and my children have their own'. It would be worth examining how far and in which ways this freedom could be developed in classes, where there are more children and there is less time and intimacy than in the family.

I also became interested in the positions of this teacher as regards the teaching of SCE and the treatment of politics at school.

## POLITICS

The presence of politics in this school is examined with reference to the teaching of the *SCE subject* at grade 6, because this was the only time when I realised, during my six weeks' stay at this school, that pupils discussed politics[2]. It appeared that teacher P (grade 6) was the only one who talked about politics with his pupils; and he did so, in my presence, while teaching SCE.

### SCE subject and Politics

Teacher P told me that he found SCE very interesting, which could be seen in that he never, at least when I observed his classes, mixed the SCE teaching period with any teaching of other subjects. I also saw him examining children regularly in SCE, scolding those who had not read their lesson. His teaching, as his sayings and my observations suggested, was done mainly through discussions with children. He said that children liked discussions very much; I observed that when the bell rang for break after SCE class, even some of the most naughty boys continued talking to him or to me about the issues that were raised in class. The discussion points often emerged from the textbook, but the teacher frequently went much beyond it. I found that most of the points that went beyond the textbook had an apparent political tone, though not serving party politics. A discussion on the role of politics went as follows:

-'Why shouldn't we say 'I don't care about politics and I don't deal with it?' (teacher)
-'Then the state will not exist...' (child)
-'So what?' (teacher)
-'Many bad things can happen if there is not a state.'
-'What do you mean by this?' (teacher)
[Many children seem confused]
-'If we don't care about the state, we will not make any progress.' / 'Things may not work well' (children).
-'Yes... If you do not participate in society and you don't interfere when something is going wrong with the state, how can things be corrected and how can society go well? If we don't denounce someone who is doing something illegal to us or to someone else, he will keep doing this. If we say, let it be, I can't deal with this now, it keeps happening, but we are not alone in the world. This is politics; politics is our life itself, everyday life. Politics is not only political parties'.
-'What about political parties?' (children)
-'You should deal with politics, not necessarily with politicians or political parties; it's a little different' (teacher).
-'Some politicians do not do good to Greece' (child).
-'Whose fault is that?' (teacher P)
-'Us that we voted for these people' (children).

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[2] Teacher X, who taught SCE at grade 5, did not seem, when I observed classes of hers, to touch upon critical socio-political issues.

Clearly, the teacher sought to explain to children the broad meaning and contribution of politics, and also to encourage them towards active citizenship. I also noted that he did not hesitate to mention some unpleasant political realities. He was open enough to do so more than once. For example, on a lesson on state finances, he said:

> 'What tax do you think that Aristotle Onasis, who bought whole islands, paid? For the reason that he employed many people in his businesses, he exercised pressure on the state and there were always extenuating circumstances for him. The government pretend that they don't see what the powerful people do, because they depend financially on them.'

Sometimes, children led teacher P to make points that can be considered radical. For example:

> -'The higher level the politicians have, the higher is the level which education acquires' (child).
> -'What your classmate says is very important. In totalitarian regimes, politicians like the people to be uneducated, so that they can manipulate them. For example, in the Greek totalitarian regime of the 1970s, there were a lot of football games to keep people busy. This happens with other politicians as well' (teacher P).

Similar points, more or less non-conformist, are important in that they can make pupils think openly about socio-political issues.

As regards children's attitudes to SCE, my observation of classes indicated that most children willingly participated in the lesson discussions, while some of them sought to continue discussing with their teacher and their classmates when the bell was ringing for break. In this respect, the typical consideration of subjects such as SCE as less important (Noutsos, 1979) did not appear to influence them at class time. Moreover, five out of the twenty pupils of teacher P gave, in their questionnaire responses, a distinguished place to SCE. For example:

> -'The subject that I like best is SCE, because it talks about culture and people, and what happens in man's daily life.'
> -'The subject that I like best is SCE, because we discuss many interesting things that we should know about.'

There were still some children who considered SCE as not important, mentioning its lack of relevance to further education. This might be due to the influence of the previously mentioned social assumptions. However, overall, SCE did not seem, in this classroom, to go unnoticed or unexamined.

I thought that teaching SCE as described above was relevant to children's lives; it was also political in ways that had nothing to do with propaganda or narrow interests. These characteristics of SCE teaching largely originated from the teacher's sensitivities, rather than the prescribed curriculum or textbook. Notably, teacher P confirmed to me my hypothesis that he made similar points and discussions in other subjects; 'there are many opportunities to do so', he said. He added: 'children are very political.' I wonder whether it was he or the children who were 'political'. I doubt whether children would be so political if he were not so political as well; most probably, it was a

continuous interaction between them that created this picture. In other classrooms, my observations indicated that only rarely did students themselves make political comments. Most teachers as well appeared to be neutral.

## OVERVIEW

This school, according to my impressions and those of the teachers, was distinguished by a relatively family-like atmosphere. There were some particular factors that seemed to encourage this atmosphere: the small number of pupils at school, the picturesque neighbourhood and the building's construction and decoration. The fact that all the teachers had worked at this school for about a decade, the lack of academic pressure, and the teachers' concern for children's lives contributed to establishing a family-like, and more person-centred atmosphere. Maybe, it was not so important that there really existed such an atmosphere as that teachers talked about it, creating, in this way, expectations for cultivating and maintaining it. As for how this was done, the tension between parents and teachers, which the teachers did not appear to alleviate, as well as the fact that some teachers sometimes behaved inappropriately, often marred the atmosphere; so did instances of competitiveness and racism among children. Beyond such problems, an impression that remained was the great interest of the Head and most teachers (including those with more established status) in children's behaviour and development as persons. Participating in extra-curricular activities with a cultural tone, as well as speaking politically, also appeared to add to this picture.

# CHAPTER NINE
# SCHOOL E

This chapter presents the findings of the fifth case study, which I conducted in a state school in a village of central Greece. A rural school was explored because I was thought that a non-city school context could offer insights for the study of moral, social and citizenship education, especially as compared to the urban contexts of the previous four schools. My living in the village and my acquaintance and socialisation with many community members offered me additional information about the school and its community context and role.

## THE CONTEXT

### The School

> 'My school is very pretty and I love coming to it... Our schoolyard is very big. It has tulips and roses, as well as willows, plane and plum trees' (Maria, grade 6).

The school was located at the entrance of the village, next to the church and some playing fields. It was housed in an old stone building, which had been recently restored. The school had a long tiled porch with flowers and trees in front of it, as well as a two-level yard, which all overlooked a lovely landscape of green slopes and fields. The school had thirty-five pupils, who were organised in small classes of six to eleven pupils. Grades 1 and 2, as well as grades 3 and 4, were taught by one classroom teacher respectively, whereas each of grades 5 and 6 had a separate teacher. This primary school was the only school in the village; there was no secondary school, and secondary school pupils had to attend school at a bigger village nearby.

### The Community

The village had about five hundred permanent inhabitants, while there were also many people who had lived there in the past and who came back in holiday periods. Most inhabitants of the village, as the surnames of the students suggested or as they told me themselves, were relatives, close or distant, of one another. Living for three weeks in the village, I realised that, beyond the kinship bonds, people socialised much with each other, either in the three village cafes or in the neighbourhoods; I also noted that none of the houses I visited (around ten) kept their doors locked. Socialisation was also facilitated by the fact that most villagers did not seem to be very busy. Men were mostly pig-breeders or farmers, who usually employed workers; most women were

housewives. Most villagers kept, within their houses, gardens where they grew vegetables; they also bred goats and hens for milk and eggs. Life at the village was said to be very economical, thus people did not need to work very hard; there was not much employment either, which caused financial problems for some families. Though most people were said to live richly or comfortably, there were also people living in poverty.

### The Teachers

The teachers lived either in the village or in villages and little towns nearby. They had worked in this school for at least five years. They appeared to be familiar not only with each other, but also with most of the villagers, many of whom were either relatives or friends. Both the Head (who was the teacher of grade 6) and the other teachers had received non-university level teacher training, and did not appear to seek further education for themselves. They were all married with children, and had farming as a second financial resource. When socialising with them at school, I saw them often help each other with preparing for teaching (e.g. with physics experiments), as well as with commuting between school and home; this created, as they said themselves, 'a family atmosphere'. They also seemed to take care of the school as if it were their own home; I saw them taking pleasure in growing flowers in the yard, taking care of the trees, and inviting workers to take care of the building. They often talked to me as follows:

> 'I want to have thirty rose trees grown.' / 'I had the trees whitened' (teacher D).
> 'Do you like the railings that I had painted white?' / 'I had this school restored myself; it was not that beautiful' (teacher T).

These activities and comments of the teachers indicate that, apart from their daily teaching duties, they were committed to the school, in which they were also hosts. This personal involvement of teachers could contribute into establishing a more 'family-like' ethos at the school.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The relationships that appeared to mark the school ethos included those developed between the *community and the school*, the *teachers and the pupils*, and *among the pupils*. These relationships developed in relation to the *academic emphasis* at the school and the community, the *pupils' morale*, as well as *discipline* and *pedagogic* issues.

### Bonds with the Community

The school building, which dated back to the 1940s, housed the old school that most villagers attended themselves; that is why their comments often indicated feelings of nostalgia.

Unlike Athens schools, the door of the school was not locked, and parents and visitors were free to come in: 'we don't have safety problems as in city schools', teachers told me. I often saw villagers paying visits to the school; some old ladies also presented the teachers, including me, with fruit, eggs or vegetables. I also saw some young mothers coming to school with their pre-school age children to familiarise them with the school they would attend later. I noticed that teachers gladly welcomed these visitors, whom they seemed happy to see. Overall, I formed the impression that teachers wanted the school and the community to be close. I thought that teachers, given their non-university level education, their involvement in farming and their kinship or friendship bonds with many villagers, felt part of the village community. Thus, any non-friendly or distant relationships with it would seem unnatural to them.

The teachers of grade 5 and 6, who were older, more experienced, and did more with regard to school maintenance and extra-curricular activities than the others, were particularly active in the community life as well. Teacher (grade 6), who was the Head of the school, had taught there for fifteen years, and was among the founding members of the Village Cultural Committee, said:

> 'The co-operation with the community has always been good. Whatever I ask from them, they contribute. For example, the Cultural Committee of the community donated the computer that is in the grade 6 classroom.'

Teacher D (grade 5), who had organised pupils and adults in groups for folk dancing and singing, was not so pleased with the community co-operation; he mentioned to me that a choir group he had organised was recently split due to party political conflicts. Teacher T (Head) explained to me that this was an unpleasant incident only, and that things would improve after villagers came to know his colleague better, who had worked there for only two years. Apart from such incidents, a dominant impression was that both teachers and villagers felt that they had to help each other. As the Head said, when interviewed:

> 'The school is a living organisation within the community; there are no walls between. The school gives life to the village. The villages, whose schools have closed, are 'finished'. The few children left in the school go to another village, and you see the decline; no celebrations on national anniversaries or at Christmas... Children bring life!'

This point indicates that a school in a small village is not only for children's education, which may also be restricted to the basics, given that villagers may consider that it is adequate if children can become successful farmers instead of university graduates - this issue is discussed in the next paragraph. The school is also central to the cultural and social life of both the children and the adults - how the village participated in events organised by the school is described later. The central role of the school as a social unit in the life of the village has implications for the school ethos. It particularly suggests that the teachers and the pupils cannot be closed in themselves or become attached to any notions of individualistic academic success; instead, they need to be open to the

community they belong to. To discuss further these relationships, it is illuminating to examine the academic profile of the school.

**Academic Emphasis**

Teachers' non-university educational level did not mean that they did not care adequately for children's academic performance. I often saw teachers bringing books of their own to show or to lend to children. All teachers often expressed to me and to each other their dissatisfaction over children's neglect of their reading. They assigned much responsibility for this to parents, specifically to their low educational level, and mainly to their not caring enough:

> 'Children don't see their parents read' (teacher T (Head), grade 6).
> 'Parents deal with farming and not at all with their children's reading... they don't check their children' (teacher S, grades 3 and 4).
> 'There are children who perform poorly and their parents do not come. Tell them I won't bite them' (teacher N, grades 1 and 2).
> 'Parents don't come to ask about their children's progress unless it is for the grading report' (teacher D, grade 5).

I thought that some parents were not practically in a position to help their children adequately; most of them were said to have attended primary school only; another reason was that many of them were too young and immature to help – teacher S told me that some mothers were in their early twenties and had got married at around fifteen. Some teachers tried to change the situation. Teacher N (grades 1 and 2) told me that he kept stressing to parents that, despite their low educational level, they should not feel weak but try to help their children a little. Teacher S (grades 3 and 4) confided in me that she assigned low grades to her pupils in the spring term reports, so that 'parents and children would start caring more'; the result was, she told me, that parents soon became more concerned. She was sure that parents cared very much about grading; she added that she avoided teaching at the school of the village she lived in, so that parents would not load her with complaints about grades. Teacher D, when interviewed, also said that parents cared mainly for grades, explaining that these have to do with parents' 'public image and selfishness'.

Beyond such efforts, teachers also appeared to accept the fact that many of their pupils would work in farming or cattle breeding, like their parents. While teaching SCE at grade 6, I was impressed when all the boys answered my question about what work they wanted to do later, by saying 'pig-breeding' and/or 'farming'. When I told teachers this, they were not surprised, and explained to me:

> 'Some pupils come from families with a successful pig breeding business. It's a lot of money without working very hard; it's very easy profit. Why should they study hard? Many well-educated people are unemployed' (teacher T).

> 'Families with such a profitable business do not want to sell it away to non-family people, and they cultivate such feelings in their children' (teacher D).

However, not all children belonged to families who were rich from farming or cattle breeding. For example, when observing classes and doing some teaching at grade 5, I noticed a boy who could hardly read; teachers told me that this boy, who was not from a wealthy family, did not want any help, and neither did his parents. I expressed in the staffroom the view that if poor children like him received further education, they could get a better life. However, the teachers had a different idea:

> 'This boy is eleven years old and he milks the cows and the sheep before coming to school in the morning; he helps his parents a lot with their work. It's o.k. Let him be a farmer. Such people are much needed as well. It is not necessary that everyone becomes well educated.'

It seems that the teachers, though they wished that their pupils performed better, accepted, to a great extent, that these children had some non-academically based future choices that were not to be despised. I thought that teachers, despite not being disinterested, would not have very high academic expectations from their students. I also thought that this context could largely account for pupils lacking anxiety about lessons; for example, when observing them at breaktime, I never saw them reading or discussing lessons and grades. I did not witness the expression of any feelings of competitiveness either. Overall, these children were in a different position from city children who had to receive further education in order to enter the job market successfully.

This lack of academic pressure (in both the community and the school) marked pupil-pupil relationships too.

**Pupil-Pupil Relationships**

A way in which the relationships among pupils were influenced by the low academic emphasis was that the latter left children with plenty of free time to play and socialise together. Every time when the school ended at noon, I saw many children going to play in the fields nearby instead of going home to eat or study. During my afternoon and evening walks in the village, I saw that children of similar and different ages were almost always together, talking and playing. My observations at breaktime also indicated that children played together in a much more peaceful way than the city pupils I had met in the previous four case studies, apart from some incidents where they would quarrel about who would be the leader; for example, I never saw them hitting each other. Pupil-pupil relationships within this context had little chance to be marred by feelings of competitiveness about academic performance; this is another way in which relationships between pupils benefited from low academic pressure. Teacher T suggested another reason why pupils were close to each other:

-'Your pupils look very close to each other' (researcher).
-'They are so few' he answered, 'How else could it be?'

Though the small number was a contributing factor, I thought that it was not the sole or the most important one. When teaching at grade 6, I had the following talk with the pupils:

-'You seem to have a nice time together' (researcher).
-'We play together all the time' (pupils).
-'Where?' (researcher)
-'Everywhere' (pupils).

Apart from much free time, children had much free space; I noticed that almost all houses had gardens, while slopes and fields surrounded the village. Much space existed in the school as well. When I asked pupils of grade 6 to write about their school's contribution, a boy wrote: 'our school has a big yard and we have a lot of space to play'. The relaxed lifestyle of the village was compatible with children's carefree life; children could also see that their parents had spare time for socialisation. To see how children felt about their lifestyle, I took the opportunity, when teaching at grade 6, to ask pupils how they would feel about living outside the village. I saw them looking at me with surprise and displeasure; then I mentioned that they could try new experiences and see things and people outside the village. They answered directly that they would not like to live anywhere else, as they had a lovely time there. I thought that they might change later, but this could not change the fact that they appeared to live a happy childhood there.

**Pupils' morale**

I thought that the children's feeling of happiness with their life at the village could also account for the fact that they did not appear to be aggressive or impertinent towards each other. When observing classes, I also noted that children, even the most distracted ones, did not appear to express any feelings or attitudes of disrespect towards teachers. I spoke of my impressions to the teachers, who agreed with me and gave some explanations:

> 'Children are out in the fields and the hills, and they play themselves out. They are very lively, but not cheeky or aggressive. It's good and normal that they are hyperactive and lively' (teacher D).
> 'These children are not aggressive because they play freely in the open air all day. They can run, and they are not trapped in apartments like city kids' (teacher T).

Children appeared to enjoy other freedoms and joys as well; they could play with tortoises, frogs, hens, donkeys and horses in their houses and fields. Moreover, when walking around the village, I was often surprised to see male pupils in grades 5 and 6 drive motorcycles, cars and tractors. All these activities helped children release their energy. When observing at breaktime, I could also see that children were allowed to play with balls that teachers themselves provided. When I told teachers that this was not the case in the Athens schools I had examined, they told me that there

were 'no safety problems'. Teacher N stressed to me: 'children need to play outdoors, otherwise their nerves will be disturbed', while other teachers seemed to agree; teachers themselves, as coming from the area, would have memories of playing freely in the open.

I thought that children's behaviour was related not only to their working off their energy but also to their family conditions. Teacher T told me: 'families have stronger ties here, despite any problems. I've been teaching here for fifteen years and I've had children with broken families only this year'. Though I suggested that parents' not splitting did not mean that families were necessarily harmonious, teachers told me that their pupils lived, overall, in a more family-like atmosphere compared to city children. These circumstances could offer children emotional security and prevent serious behavioural problems that could stem from family upheavals. I thought that the sense of neighbourhood that distinguished the village could have also contributed to developing a family atmosphere for children to live in.

Another explanation of why children did not appear to be disruptive at school had to do with the feelings and attitudes of respect that the community developed for the person of the teacher. A mother, born in the village, told me:

> 'In the village, parents are uneducated and they see teacher as someone superior to them; children also see their teacher like that, or they are brought up to do so. They don't have many other 'important images' here.'

It seems that parents and children perceived the teachers as important persons; thus, pupils behaved themselves before teachers. Many villagers I met, from the taxi driver to old ladies in the neighbourhood, appeared to speak with respect for the school and the teachers, whom they appeared to know well enough. Speaking with them, I had the feeling that this sense of respect was directed towards me as well, as being a teacher. Specifically as regards pupils' behaviour, teacher T said:

> 'Children are somehow bashful. They don't answer you back in a bad way; they have respect for teachers. Only one or two out of twenty children may become impertinent sometimes, but they soon regret it and behave themselves.'

I would sometimes experienced this bashfulness of pupils myself, when I did some teaching or talked to them. For example, when teaching for a whole day at grade 6, where male students were said to be undisciplined as compared to the other students of the school, I realised that a remark of mine could make these boys blush and/or remain very quiet for the rest of the day.

These characteristics of children had implications for discipline.

**Discipline**

The respectfulness and bashfulness that mostly characterised pupils' attitudes towards teachers implied that no serious discipline problems would develop at school. When raising the

issue of discipline with teachers, they all told me that it was not a problem, especially as compared to city schools. Teacher D, who had worked in an Athens school for seven years, offered a comparative description:

> 'We don't have serious problems of discipline as happens in city schools. Violence and use of inappropriate language are much less frequent here than in Athens. Children here may be naughty, but they are not impertinent. Their 'bad' behaviour is largely due to their naivety or their effort to show off their dynamism. It's not anything that cannot be handled.'

Village children who, as explained above, could release their energy by playing freely in the open, and felt little academic pressure, did not have many reasons to become seriously nervous, stressed, impertinent or aggressive towards their teachers or classmates. Another factor that kept discipline problems minimal was the small number of pupils. The school had four teachers for thirty-five pupils only, while no teacher had more than eleven pupils in his/her classroom, which made discipline and control much easier to keep than in classrooms of thirty children (as in school C). The small number of children also meant that it was easy for teachers to keep an eye on them in the breaktime; when the weather was good, the teachers would sit under the tiled porch, closer to the children. The small number of pupils both as a total and in each classroom also meant that any problems in their behaviour would be easily perceived. Frequently sitting with teachers at breaktime, I noted that children were very sensitive to any incidents of misbehaviour, because they kept coming to report them to teachers:

> 'Sir, he told me 'f*** you!' (a child, shocked, reports to the teachers)
> 'He tripped me up and I fell down!'
> 'He took the ball from me!'

I noted that though teachers were often tired of such incidents, they were not indifferent; they would try to solve the problems, and would reprimand children who misbehaved. I also noticed that teacher N was keen on holding 'mini-courts'. I did not witness or hear about any incidents of teachers hitting children; when I asked teachers about it, they expressed to me their disapproval, stressing that it was not a practice of this school in recent years. They added that parents in the village did not hit their children, and would not accept such incidents at school. I also thought that teachers did not often come to the point of losing their temper with children.

The limited extent of discipline problems relates closely to teacher-pupil relationships.

**Teacher-Pupil Relationships**

Children, as mentioned above, were respectful towards their teachers; my observations of classes and teachers' comments suggested that any disruption at class time did not last long. It was not only the status of teachers that secured order and peace in teacher-pupil relationships. Teachers

also appeared to be close to children in many ways. For example, when sitting with them at breaktime, I could see that they talked much about children's behaviour and life, not in a gossipy but in a considerate way. The facts that teachers lived in or near the village, about whose life and people they appeared to know much, and that the society was small, facilitated teachers' awareness of children's lives and family problems. Sometimes, I saw teachers trying to support some poor pupils by providing them with food. When joining a school excursion to a park, I saw teachers gladly buying ice cream for all the children, so that those without money would not feel bad. Probably, the teachers' origin from the broader village area, and not from a very different social class or place, brought them close to children's lives. Moreover, the fact that, as shown above, pupils could turn to their teachers over any misunderstandings with their classmates, and the teachers were not indifferent, would make children feel secure at school. Lastly, pupils did not feel, in general terms, serious academic pressure by teachers and others, thus they could not easily experience school as causing them stress and other negative feelings. All these factors seemed to create a strong sense of community in the school, where pupils felt close to their teachers.

Beyond such general points, it was classroom teachers' distinctive personality that could create a positive ethos. Teacher T, who had consistently taught grade 6 in recent years, told me:

> 'When children go to high school to another village nearby, they keep visiting the school and sit in the classroom with me. They talk to me about their new experiences; we have good communication. I meet former students in the village and we are very happy to see each other.'

I thought that this communication would not occur if this teacher were not liked as a person. As regards teacher-pupil relationships, it can be 'little things' in teachers' behaviour that could feed affection into them; for example, I sometimes saw teacher D staying, after school was dismissed, to teach a little boy how to play the flute; he looked very happy doing this, and so did the boy.

Through such teacher-pupil relationships, pupils could feel respected, cared for and liked, which is fundamental to their development as moral and social beings. Moreover, through such relationships the bonds between the school and the community could become stronger.

**Pedagogy**

My observations of lessons indicated that whole-class teaching was combined with discussions with children. Discussions were facilitated by the small number of children in each class (six to eleven). I could see that children discussed frequently and comfortably; they could do so without raising their hand for permission from the teachers, who, generally, did not seem to need to intervene to impose discipline while children were discussing. Desks were also organised in group-centred ways; this was facilitated by the large space inside classrooms. Overall, I suggest that

the good discipline kept at school, the quality of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, and the family-like atmosphere of the school, greatly supported the presence and the development of these pedagogical approaches. A group-oriented spirit was cultivated by extra-curricular activities too.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities in this school appeared to be largely related to the community's life, bringing the school and the pupils into the centre of it.

### School Celebrations

Before I conducted this case study, the Head of School C, who had taught in rural schools for ten years, told me:

> 'The school celebrations at rural schools are unique; all the villagers participate, and feel happy about it. It is a great feast for the village as well.'

I remembered this comment when I observed the school celebration for the national anniversary of the 25th March, when the Greeks honour the revolution of their ancestors, in 1821, against the Turkish occupation. On this day, which is a religious anniversary as well (the Annunciation of Mother Mary is celebrated), I saw most of the villagers going to church to attend the service, along with the pupils and the teachers, and then going to the schoolyard to attend the school celebration. I was surprised to note that even men who spent all the day in the cafes playing cards attended the celebration with interest. An old lady told me:

> 'It's been always like that on this day. We go to church and then to the school, to take pride in our children saying their poems and singing.'

Teacher T told me that if he changed the timing of the celebration to a working day or in the evening, fewer people would come. He explained:

> 'People want to hear these songs and poems on this day. One year I did the celebration another day, and people were displeased.'

I noted that the President of the village and some political representatives of the broader area were also present in the celebration, which they closed by praising and thanking the children. At the end, the pupils offered, on behalf of the president and the school, a dessert and refreshments to the villagers, who seemed to have enjoyed everything greatly.

The community participation in the school celebration seemed new to me, but not to those involved:

> 'It is like that at all school celebrations. At the Christmas celebration, almost all the village came again, and it was snowing outside; there was a wonderful atmosphere' (teacher N).

One reason why the villagers were so fond of the school celebrations and eager to attend them was that they liked to enjoy their children's participation, while they also had time to do so. A more important reason seemed to be that, in the broader area, not many cultural events were organised. Teacher N stressed the social role of the celebrations, beyond any specific messages they conveyed:

> 'If we don't organise any celebrations, people in the village feel neglected. The school is the centre of the community. If we keep people here in the village isolated from some cultural and social opportunities like these, they will wither.'

Similarly, teacher D, who organised these celebrations to a great extent and had also organised pupils and adults in singing and music groups, wrote once in the village newspaper:

> 'The aim is that the school becomes the centre of the cultural life of the village.'

When interviewed, he explained to me why:

> 'I think that both the culture of man and the level of the countryside will be raised with the development of cultural activities. If these improve, the villagers' cultural level will change; the financial level has, after all, improved.'

Beyond any benefits for the villagers, I also thought that through these celebrations, children might feel happy to do something of their own in front of the villagers. In this way, the school became an integral, lively part of the village, and pupils could develop as active members of it.

**School Trips**

The rural area around the school did not seem to offer cultural opportunities for children; for example, there was no theatre for children or adults, while in the biggest town nearby there were only two museums, which teachers considered as unorganised and not interesting. When I witnessed, in the staffroom, teachers' talk about where they could take children for a short school trip, it was evident that they did not have much choice. What were left to see, apart from the two museums, were an old castle and a zoo, but the children had been taken to these places many times. A visit to a factory for dairy products seemed to be the most 'original' place to go. Finally, children were taken to the factory, the castle and the zoo, as well as to a park to play, which I realised, on joining the trip, appealed most to students.

**Student Participation**

Students' participation in the school celebrations, which were attended by most villagers, could be considered as a form of participation in the community's life. When observing, as described above, a school national celebration, I realised that all the children participated in some way. Staying at the school for the two weeks prior to the celebration, I could see that teachers encouraged children to participate not only by reciting poems and singing; they also asked pupils to

do the decorations and to make speeches to the villagers, which was done, in the past, by the teachers. Teacher T explained: 'We want children to learn to stand in front of the people'; I could see that pupils seemed glad to do so, especially after the celebration was completed successfully.

Beyond celebrations, children became active in other ways. I often saw teacher D (grade 5) taking his pupils to help him grow flowers or take care of the strawberries in the school flowerbeds; he often used teaching time for this, but nobody seemed to mind. Pupils in grade 6 were encouraged by their teacher to participate in another way; I saw them daily selling to students bread baguettes, which, their teacher told me, they sold at a slightly higher price than they bought them for; the money they collected was entered in the class account and could be used for buying books or PC software. Boys appeared proud of this activity; 'with this money, we will organise a free school trip with a barbecue', they told me.

Importantly, teachers encouraged, and seemed happy about, their pupils' participation in the school and community life. This attitude can be attributed to teachers' belief that there should be no walls between the school and the village; another factor was that they did not see school as a source of academic learning only. This participation of students is important in that it promotes their self-esteem and empowers them as persons and members of their community, which they can come to know better and possibly try to improve. In this way, active citizenship is not a distant reality from school.

The next section, which discusses the presence of religion in the school, gives further information about school and community values.

## RELIGION

This part presents the religious messages offered to pupils through *religious activities* and the *teaching of RE*; the relationship of the *community* to religion is first examined.

### Community and Religion

When the School Advisor of the area visited the school during my stay there, he told me about the underlying values of the area:

> 'Here in the countryside, people are closer to church. Religion, family and patriotism are still important ideals here, by contrast to big cities.'

When I talked to teachers and some villagers about the content of this statement, they verified it; I sought to see whether and how it could become evident in the school's religious activities.

## Religious Activities

The religious activities that were performed were only those prescribed by law (1566/1985), that is *school prayer* and *attendance at church.*

### *School Prayer*

My observations indicated that each morning all the children lined up in front of their teachers, who were all present, to say the morning prayer. A different child every separate day was called to say it, while all the pupils repeated it aloud. The teachers sometimes invited little children of age 6 to say the prayer, so that they would learn it well. The fact that all the children had to say the prayer aloud, and the closeness to their teachers, did not leave them any scope for disruption at that time. If any pupil tried to speak to another, he/she was immediately reprimanded. In these circumstances, prayer time became something that the pupils had to respect. At the end of the school day, I noted that there was also a prayer said inside the classrooms; it would end like this: 'Our Lord, thank you for the good time we spent at school'. Of the other schools I examined, this happened only at the religious school (School A).

### *Attendance at Church*

The village church and the school were located next to each other; teacher S told me that this was often the case in villages, indicating the traditionally established bonds between education and religion. I also noticed that there were no railings or walls between the yard of the church and the rear of the school, and it was easy to move from one to the other.

The natural closeness of the church had implications: children would hear the bell ringing the time hourly, and I saw them often making the sign of the cross; moreover, the priest - the teachers told me - would readily open the church doors to explain to children about the church hymns, rituals and symbols. Some teachers also promoted the familiarisation of children with church. For example, teacher N told his pupils:

> 'There are some basics at church. For instance, when you light a candle while entering an Orthodox church, the flame symbolises the glory of faith'.

Teacher T told me:

> 'Each Friday, I read with the children the Gospel text for Sunday. I explain it to them so that they can understand it when they go to church; we know almost all the gospels.'

Such explanations could make church attendance more meaningful and also familiarise children with some of the moral and social values of Christianity.

I also noted that teacher T (grade 6), who was the Head as well, gave pupils a leaflet with the title 'How students prepare for school at home'; he concluded it, after mentioning the need for

doing homework and bringing the necessary materials to school, with the sentence 'I am a Christian Orthodox and each Sunday I go to church.' I had not seen such a written suggestion even in School A, which had some distinctive religious features. I thought, though, that it was not only the teacher's religious position, but also the community context that fitted with such recommendations. When interviewing this teacher, I asked for further information; he said:

> 'This is only a recommendation, an invitation; it's not a rule. Parents are not annoyed; it's a more traditional society here, though parents are not annoyed either if their children don't go to church. If I tried to *impose* church going, there might be some reactions, but very few I think. I don't know if this happens because it's a village, I mean if it is me or the church that they respect.'

He also stressed to me that, though he lived in a town fifteen kilometres away, he often came to the village church on Sundays, especially for religious celebrations. The other teachers told me that they mostly did the same as well. As to the children, on attending the church service at the village for three Sundays, I saw that most of the pupils of teacher T, as well as some younger ones, came to church. As for children's behaviour in the church, I saw that whenever they spoke to each other, they were tactful and careful not to be noisy. When they got bored or tired, they would go out for a while and come back later. Possibly, through the above influences, they had learnt to show respect for religious services.

**RE subject**

My observations of classes at grades 5 and 6 indicated that RE was taught through a combination of whole-class teaching and discussion with pupils. Teachers appeared to frequently use books of their own as well as the textbook; they seemed eager to do so, possibly influenced by their own religious feelings.

Exploring, through the questionnaire, the ideas of pupils about RE, I found that, in grade 6, five out of the seven pupils wrote that RE was one of the most interesting and/or important subjects for them. The stated reasons were that the subject appealed to them, as well as that it dealt with Christ and religion. For example:

> 'The subject I like best is RE because it is about *our* religion and the life of Christ' (anonymous) (emphasis added).

I thought that the positive attitude of the community to religion could account for these preferences of the children. Teacher T agreed, adding:

> 'I also like RE a lot. I have some relationship to Church somehow – children see that I come to church here... '

This comment indicates the extent to which the classroom teacher, and his/her ethos, can impact on the teaching of the curriculum.

I sought, by using the questionnaire again, to compare the attitudes of this teacher's pupils to those of the grade 5 pupils, whose teacher never expressed, at least to me, any special interest in, and fondness for, RE. I saw that seven out of nine students reported RE to be one of the most interesting and/or important subjects. They wrote either that RE was 'nice' or that they could learn about Christ and religion; for example:

> 'It is about *our* Christian Orthodox life and we should know about Christ and his miracles' (emphasis added).

I also noted that even a boy who did not want to read anything or bring any books and notebooks to the school, and did not want to complete the questionnaire, wrote in it that the most important subject of all was RE as 'talking about Christ'. To learn more, on a day when I did some teaching with grade 5, I asked pupils, adopting a surprising tone, how come they liked RE so much; my question, as suggested by their looks, surprised them unpleasantly, and a boy exclaimed to me, in a scolding way: 'RE is about *our* religion! We *must* know about it!' I thought that these preferences and exclamations of children related closely to the values of their community, beyond any relevant values of their teachers. It is also indicated that the community context and its values can impact on the taught curriculum, especially on the status of subjects.

The influence of community values is also shown in the next section, which discusses politics.

## POLITICS

The presence of politics in the school is discussed with reference to the *community* context, the *political messages* that seemed to be delivered at school and the *teaching of SCE.*

### Community and Politics

Some villagers told me that the three cafes of the village each represented one of the major political parties: the left- and right-wing, and the central one. Villagers were 'related by tradition, by family, to some political party' (teacher S). They also had relatively recent experiences and family memories from the civil war of the 1950s, which made some of them fanatical; when sitting in two of these cafes, I sometimes heard some men condemning people who belonged to an opposite party. Teacher D, when interviewed, complained to me that his efforts to develop a women's choir group were ruined, 'because political factors came in'. He explained that this occurred at the period of the municipal elections, when the party political tension had increased. Such incidents seemed to mar the social atmosphere of the village.

**Political messages**

When sitting with teachers at breaktime, I sometimes heard them discussing politics, but, when observing classes of theirs, they never started such discussions with their pupils. They may have avoided doing so either in front of me or generally, considering that villagers would be annoyed if political messages were offered at school. However, I noted such a case, which was both implicit and explicit: some of the notice boards in each classroom were decorated with geometrical designs, one of which was very similar to the sign of the government party. I was also interested to note that teacher D, who, as far I knew, supported this party as well, had tried to partly cover the signs with children's paintings. I thought that he was trying to avoid exposing his students to political messages. Though I wanted to ask teachers how and why this occurred, I avoided doing so after giving some thought to background factors. Initially, I had difficulty in gaining access to this school, because the School Advisor expressed the fear that my presence could cause alarm in 'the small suspicious society'. I had understood, from teachers' discussions at breaktime, that the School Advisor himself and at least three of the four teachers supported the party whose sign was displayed on the noticeboard. I was afraid that any questions of mine on the issue might cause discomfort to them, and maybe my removal from the field.

**National Spirit**

Right-wing political ideas were, according to some inhabitants whom I talked to, very strong in the village, if not prevalent. Many villagers were said to be 'righter than the right', and patriotism was a precious ideal of theirs. Beyond any political preferences, patriotism, I was told, was strong in rural societies:

> 'Here, teachers and pupils feel closer to country and nation than in the cities, where people become alienated from patriotic ideals' (School Advisor).
> 'The triptych 'Nation, Religion, Family' is still strong here' (teacher D).

Some villagers I talked to verified these comments. As regards the school's relationship with such national ideals, I was interested to note that it was the school yard that accommodated the village's monument in memory of the villagers who died in the first and second world wars. When reading the names of the dead on the marble monument, I realised that many were the same as the surnames of many students; there were, as the teachers said, kinship relationships between them. At the national celebration that I observed, the children said all the names of the dead and the villagers repeated 'present', which meant, as was explained to me, 'present in our heart'. The attendance of almost all the villagers at the school national celebration demonstrated, to the students as well, that the celebration and the ideals involved were greatly valued.

Patriotism was not only a traditional ideal that was kept in the same way as family and religious values were kept. When interviewing teacher D, whom I had seen often speaking to his pupils about the history of their country and their village, it appeared that patriotic feelings were relevant to survival as well:

> 'It is among my aims to keep the history of the village and the country alive. I am a local patriot. I'd like the children to live happily and creatively wherever it's better for them, but I'd like them to know where they set out from, what's the place of their origin and what are the good things and treasures this place hides. It is from these children that we expect, tomorrow, to support this place, which is gradually shrinking. The countryside is generally shrinking.'

These thoughts seemed to represent the fears of the older people that the village would decline. Possibly, this is an important reason why the village seemed to support the school.

My observations suggested that these patriotic, or local patriotic, feelings of teachers did not take them to extremes, e.g. they did not try to convince children to stay in the village. They did not seem to promote nationalism either. For example, Teacher D, after presenting a lesson on the conquest of Constantinople, told pupils:

> 'What the Turks did to us then does not mean that you should hate a Turk who might sit next to you.'

Moreover, teacher T told me that the school plays he organised with children for the national celebrations did not have to do with battles and historical events, but with peace and fraternity; he explained that any animosities between nations do not have to be perpetuated.

As regards the students' response, I never saw them expressing any patriotic enthusiasm, and teachers did not mention anything like this either. In the essays that I asked pupils in grades 5 and 6 to write on the school's contribution to their lives, none of them mentioned the development of national spirit. However, in the questionnaire responses of pupils in grade 6 on the subjects they considered most interesting or important, five out of seven mentioned History in terms of learning about the history of their nation. This indicates that the community and school values do not leave the taught curriculum unaffected, especially as regards the status of some subjects – this was the case with RE as well.

**SCE subject**

In both grades 5 and 6 where I observed SCE classes, the lesson was taught, as the teachers also said, through whole-class discussions. The small number of children (not more than nine) seemed to greatly facilitate the discussion process. The teachers used largely open-ended questions and topics/pictures from the textbook for discussion. They did not seem, though, to expand much beyond the textbook or to raise critical questions about current socio-political issues. Perhaps,

considering the political tensions of the village, they did not want to touch upon serious political questions. When going beyond the textbook, the teachers commonly tried to give moral messages to children. For example, in a lesson on the merits of work, teacher D told his pupils about some old Greek proverbs, asking them to learn some of them. A child wrote in the questionnaire:

> 'A subject that I consider as very important is SCE, because you learn how to behave yourself.'

As to whether children found SCE interesting and important, their questionnaire responses indicated that most of them considered it boring and not very important. I asked teacher T about this; he said:

> 'At SCE, children don't have any appetite, I don't know why... SCE is very interesting to me. Maybe children find the concepts of the subject, i.e. nation, state, difficult.'

Though this may have some basis, if the teachers tried to touch upon more topical issues while teaching SCE, children might be more interested.

## OVERVIEW

The mostly relaxed lifestyle of the village appeared to influence positively the morale of the students and the relationships among them. In this context, also given the villagers' respect for teachers, there were no serious discipline problems. The agricultural occupational profile of the community offered to the children professional choices that did not demand further education; thus, the school did not have high academic demands, although the teachers wanted their students to be more diligent. The low academic emphasis contributed to establishing a relaxed atmosphere: it left time for communication between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves, while it also facilitated the development of less authoritarian teaching methods than in city schools I examined. It also left time for promoting students' participation in the life of the school and the community; importantly, this participation was not a simple corollary to low academic pressure. Both the teachers and the villagers promoted it, because they could see in the school and the young generation, the future of the community. Students were encouraged and supported in taking initiatives, which helped them develop as active members of their school and community. The community values influenced this development. The traditionally established respect of the villagers for religious and national values seemed to secure a high status for these values at school, as well as for the RE subject. The party political debates, and the fanaticism about them in the village, seemed to reduce the opportunities for raising socio-political discussions with students at school, while the fanaticism allowed some implicit propaganda to take place. Overall, both the ethos and the curriculum appeared to be largely influenced by the community and its values, and could be

understood by being examined in relation to them. Although such influences were found to have some problematic implications, a positive impression that remained from this school was that it was not seen as a place for academic preparation only and the students were given the opportunity to develop initiative.

# CHAPTER TEN

# MORAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION ACROSS THE CASES

This study seeks to explore the development of moral, social and citizenship education in the context of the ethos and the curriculum of five Greek primary schools. This chapter discusses themes that emerged across the five different cases which I investigated. In the relevant literature, the school ethos and the taught curriculum are commonly addressed as separate entities that may work complementarily or in opposition. Terms such as the 'taught and non-taught' curriculum, the 'formal and informal' or 'hidden' curriculum, express this separation, which may allow better exploration of each aspect or underline the importance of one compared to the other. This chapter proposes that the examination of the school ethos and the taught curriculum, when the concern is moral, social and citizenship education, requires that they be frequently examined together, because, as will be explained, one influences the other seriously. I attempt to demonstrate this interaction by structuring this chapter in three parts, dealing with the 'ethos' and the 'curriculum', and the third that brings together ethos and curriculum. In these parts I indicate that the ethos and the curriculum penetrate each other in ways that make it difficult to understand them separately.

## THE ETHOS

This part discusses ethos by exploring it at the levels of the *classroom*, the *whole school*, and the school's *social context*. Firstly, it examines the relationship between these levels; secondly, it explores features of the ethos that emerged, at these levels, as important across the schools I studied.

### The Ethos: the Classroom, the School, and the Social Context

This section discusses ethos as developing at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context, and also pinpoints the dynamics that develop between and within these levels.

#### *The Classroom*

The differences among many teachers in most schools I examined, as displayed in the portrayals of classroom teachers, suggest that not only *school* ethos but also *classroom* ethos needs to be studied. This is also seen in that when I asked children to write about the school's contribution

to their lives, they mostly mentioned the contribution of either their classroom teacher exclusively or of both the school and their teacher. One explanation for this is that primary school pupils spend most of their school day with their classroom teacher. Another is that, as many studies have shown (e.g. Coles, 1992; Matthews, 1994; Taylor, 1996), children develop a sort of simple wisdom and moral sense that escapes their elders, as well as a capability for powerfully stated observations and sustained eloquence. Teachers from all five schools that I examined claimed that children understood much about their teachers' qualities:

> 'Even when you don't speak, children can understand a lot about how you feel about yourself and them' (teacher A, School A).
> 'Children have a unique sense of reality and justice because their way of looking at the world has not been eroded by social conventions, as happens with adults' (Head, School D).

Children's liking and appreciation for their teachers as persons can create a positive classroom ethos, within which teachers' attempts to support students' personal development do not seem irrelevant or self-defeating. Moreover, as Howe (1987) suggested, children's respecting and liking for their teachers can keep them from misbehaving: when tempted to do so, they may think, 'My teacher wouldn't want me to do that'. The data indicated that children could judge their teachers severely; for example:

> 'She is *evil*!' (Giorgos, School D, judging an ex-teacher of his who used bad language and threw pupils' possessions away).

As O' Hear (1981) suggested, whether teachers like it or not, they are being judged on a moral and personal level by their pupils, who pick on traits such as impartiality, fairness, lateness, sobriety, and impatience. The data showed that children not only characterized their teachers, but also identified differences between them; for example:

> 'Thanks to Miss S, I learnt to read, to write and to make jokes. Thanks to Mrs V, I learnt to love, to agree with people and behave politely. I like her a lot (Elpida, School D).'

Significantly, the teacher of this student had told me that she cared about cultivating the psychological aspects of children rather than the cognitive ones. As regards differences between teachers and their contributions to children's lives, a child was very direct:

> 'The school offers to us either important things, or... it depends on the teacher we have' (Spiros, School D).

Children could develop deep feelings for teachers who seemed morally good to them. For example, a girl at school E wrote about her teacher:

> 'Some days ago, a child had an accident and the teacher stood by him at this difficult time. I feel that my teacher is *my fellowman*.'

In such cases, a close teacher-pupil relationship may develop. The teacher of the above girl gave an account of what marks this relationship:

> 'What I have seen during the 25 years I've been teaching, is that children can come to love the teacher, when the teacher shows his affection, especially his understanding. Children need understanding: they want the teacher to praise their work and effort, to stand by them in difficulties, and mainly not to insult them.'

These comments draw attention to the feelings of caring, which can create a warm classroom atmosphere and help children become caring, liking and loveable persons (Acker, 1995). The last point made by the teacher above, on not humiliating the children, is very important as well. If pupils feel underestimated as persons by their teachers, they may lose respect for themselves and others. As reported by D. Hargreaves (1982) on his research in the hidden curriculum of British secondary schooling, when students' dignity is destroyed at school, attempts at moral and social education seem only pretentious. As well as to the deeper feelings of caring or humiliation, it can also be 'little things' in teachers' behaviour that can improve or harm the classroom ethos. For example, while observing different teachers' classes, I realised that aspects of the teacher's presence like the tone of voice influenced the atmosphere; a teacher who spoke calmly and politely had a different aura from a teacher with a loud irritated voice; a boy in school C complained to me about his teacher: 'he shouts and he makes us nervous'. Even if children cannot tell what the impact of every feature of teachers' behaviour is, their moral sense is not left untouched. As the research of Jackson and colleagues (1993) on the moral life of classrooms indicated, the qualities that teachers may inspire, or their personal aura, build up an 'expressive morality' and a distinctive classroom atmosphere. At this point, one could argue that teachers' making mistakes in the ways they treat students does not mean that they do not want the good for their students. For example, teacher M at school D, who appeared to be bad-tempered and autocratic, was not really indifferent to her pupils' well-being but was generally a woman with a strong temper. Teachers who do not appear to develop a positive atmosphere in their classroom may have not developed or expressed adequately their care for the class; as Noddings (1992: 2) suggested, teachers may care, but they may be 'unable to make the connections that would complete caring relationships with their students'.

The contribution of classroom teachers to students' personal development has to do not only with the moral example that teachers set and the relationship they develop with students, but also with the more systematic efforts which they may make. For example, even in a school that tends to impose rules without discussing them with pupils, the classroom teacher can try to establish a more democratic ethos in the classroom – teacher A did so in school A. Within limits, the efforts of classroom teachers can be fruitful as long as teachers are sensitive and willing enough to undertake them consistently. It can be asked to what extent individual teachers do so. Teaching is typically held to be time-consuming, undervalued, and often emotionally draining; teachers commonly feel exhausted at the end of a school day, and have little time to reflect (A. Hargreaves,

1994; Mitchell & Weber, 1999). What should be added, in the Greek context of this study, are the financial contingencies that have typically identified the Greek teaching population (Starida, 1991). I noted that teacher V (school D), who worked hard to create a classroom atmosphere based on friendliness and co-operation, told me that her job was 'like a hobby' to her, since, financially, she did not need to work and was free to retire instead of working. This does not seem to be the case for most teachers, who seemed to be overloaded with many anxieties and difficulties. This point turns the discussion to the contribution of the whole school.

***The Whole School***

Considering the above constraints on teachers' work, it may be thought that teachers cannot always work sufficiently to foster a positive ethos in their classrooms. Moreover, teachers do not work in complete isolation from the school, which may or may not support their efforts to ranging extents. For example, teachers P and V at school D, as well as teacher T at school E, could devote time and energy to the development of harmonious personal relationships in their classrooms, but not simply because they wished to do so; they also worked in schools that did not excel in academic success and were distinguished by a relatively relaxed atmosphere; thus, these teachers did not work under great pressure. If they taught elsewhere, for example, in schools A or C (that were much more academically oriented), they might not work so freely or intensely on developing a friendly classroom atmosphere. It can be argued that teachers do not choose to work in a school whose ethos they do not like; however, teachers may not always have much choice when getting a teaching post.

Some features of the whole school may be very influential when distinctive values and aims are pursued; this was the case with the private school A. However, statements do not necessarily regulate practices; for example, in this school, there were serious gaps between the proclaimed religious and moral values and the frequently authoritarian methods of the Head and some teachers. References to such differences are not uncommon in the existent literature (Halstead, 1996), while they also imply that, as shown at school A, it is not the official statements but the teachers' practices that contribute more to students' personal development. As regards the influence of the whole school as compared to that of the classroom teachers, there were examples, in this study, of teachers who tried to move away from dominant features of the whole school that they disapproved of. Teacher A at the highly academic school A would put academic pressure aside so as to maintain a group spirit in her classroom: she often suspended the lesson to help her pupils overcome their conflicts, and she also frequently involved them in group-centred non-academic activities. Though she believed in the value of these efforts, she often expressed to me her anxiety

that, in the context of the school, she did not help her pupils perform successfully and that she prepared them poorly for their next teachers. Her efforts to create a collaborative classroom ethos could develop further in a school with less academic pressure. Thus, the potential qualities of a classroom ethos may not develop adequately due to pressures by dominant opposing features of the school. Moreover, such discrepancies can make teachers and pupils feel isolated, and develop feelings and thoughts that 'in here (the classroom) it's good, out there (the school) bad'. By contrast, when teachers feel that they belong to a team or a whole school staff that works harmoniously and shares common values, they feel more confident and comfortable, and this can enhance the quality of their work (Nias, 1996). Pollard (1987), who discussed how primary school teachers related to the dominant climate of their school, talked about 'bypassing', where teachers withdraw from the dominant school ethos behind the defence of their autonomy or expertise, and 'subversion', where teachers try consciously to undermine established school practices.

Considering the above data and literature references, I would suggest that influences provided at classroom level may sometimes be more influential than those at the level of the whole school. In this study, I considered certain circumstances that may contribute to this. One could be when schools do not claim to differentiate from each other in terms of aims and philosophy – as happened in the state schools B, C, D and E. However, the fact that a school has distinct aims and values does not necessarily mean that the differentiation among classrooms is minimised; as shown in the portrayals of classroom teachers in school A, which had its own value statements and distinct religious features, teachers could vary vastly in terms of the ethos they established in their classrooms and accordingly influence the ideas of their pupils about school. Another circumstance when classroom influences can outweigh whole school influences is when the latter are not well-organised; this can happen when teachers work in isolation from each other, and/or when the Head is alienated from school life, e.g. by concentrating on administrative affairs (as happened in School B). Another case that I distinguished is when the classroom teacher has a strong presence in the school. For example, teacher P at school D, who systematically sought to help his pupils resolve their conflicts, did so at breaktime with disruptive pupils who were not in his own class; he also frequently talked to his colleagues about these experiences, commonly in a loud voice. In this way, as some parents and teachers also told me, he became prominent, and, since there were only five other teachers at the school, he made a strong mark on its ethos. By contrast, teacher A (at school A), who also embarked on such efforts with her pupils, and encouraged their participation in non-academic activities, appeared to go unnoticed: she talked very little and looked very humble, while there were about twenty more teachers in the school, commonly more expressive. I distinguished many reasons why some teachers acquire a higher profile than their colleagues; they may be older

and more experienced (generally, or at the specific school); they may be more active in the organisation of extra-curricular activities; they may intervene in matters other than those of their classroom; or they may be simply more expressive about their accomplishments. Another case, which particularly concerns the Greek context, has to do with the lack of external control and inspection of the values underlying daily classroom practices. This was largely the case in the Greek schools I examined, where very little inspection appeared to take place. The Head at school D commented on teachers' using bad language in class: 'you can say almost anything you like in class. Who can control you completely, after all?' I would suggest that even tight monitoring of schools could not control all the daily detail of school life.

Reference to the role of external inspection turns the discussion to the social context of the school, which was also called into attention by the case of teacher E at school C. This teacher sought to make her pupils less competitive and more polite, while both the children's families and the school's tradition greatly encouraged academic excellence. She often exclaimed to me and her colleagues that her efforts were fruitless, because pupils would not try to be more respectful and less competitive. Lower academic expectations at school would have allowed her to work more intensely on her pupils' behaviour; at the same time, these behavioural characteristics of children were largely attributed by the teachers to the way they were brought up in their families. This indicates that it is not only some features of the whole school but also those of the school's social context that teachers may have to fight against.

***The Social Context of the School***

The last example of teacher E demonstrates that the efforts of classroom teachers cannot always counteract satisfactorily negative influences stemming from the pupils' social context. Another relevant example was offered at school B: the teachers there often felt incapable of stopping their pupils from swearing at and hitting each other, or discriminating against the ethnic minority pupils, because these were common practices in their homes and neighbourhoods. Though the teachers disapproved of such attitudes and behaviours, they often seemed too weak to fight them. As Taylor (1996) suggested, the values of students' homes and communities exert a major influence on their personal development, while these values may conflict with, or outweigh, the school's values. Students' social background is considered to relate to how students socialise together and what culture(s) they develop, which accordingly permeate the school they attend (Stoll, 1999). I also noted in the working-class school B that some characteristics in pupils' behaviour, such as using slang and violence, were evident, to some extent, in the behaviour of some teachers too; I do not know if this happened because these teachers originated from cultures similar

to those of the pupils and/or because teachers did not find that such behaviour was incompatible with, or despised by, their pupils and their parents. Thus, it seems that the values and behaviours related to pupils' background could mark the morale of both pupils and teachers. In positive and negative ways, the social context can influence the ethos at classroom or whole school levels. For example, at the rural school E, the village children appeared to enjoy much time together playing and talking, which contributed to the development of their social ability, which in turn helped to build a friendly atmosphere at school. The data also indicated that the community context could affect children's and parents' attitudes to the school and the teachers: in the socially and educationally deprived area of school B, as well as in the culturally and educationally deprived rural area of school E, the teachers were considered as important and respectable persons, whereas the middle- or upper-class children of school C could often be impertinent to their teachers.

The findings demonstrated that it is not only the specific community or social class context that may be influential; it can also be some *broader* social features. For example, teachers at all four Athens schools attributed many problems in children's behaviour to the fact that parents work long hours and do not spare adequate time for the social education of their children. Moreover, teachers in all the Athens schools related the inability of pupils to socialise harmoniously and collaboratively with each other to the fact that within the densely populated urban areas where children live, they do not develop their social ability adequately, because they have little space and time to play together, while their main entertainment is usually watching television or playing video games. By contrast, children at the rural school E, who lived in a more family-like context and played freely in the open with their friends, coexisted more peacefully with each other. Grosch (1988) similarly noted that most village schools experience few problems of indiscipline and bullying. In these respects, the differences in ethos between urban and non-urban areas can be important. At the same time, broader features of society can impact on the ethos of schools at both rural and urban contexts. For example, teachers at all five schools which I examined mentioned the aspiration of children and parents to high grades, and attributed this phenomenon to the competitive climate of modern times. As Halstead (1996) suggested, schools are not independent of the society which they belong to, and whose values they reflect and embody.

The contextual features of the five selected schools were different mainly in terms of *social class*, and the *private or state ownership of schools*, as well as *urban and rural surroundings*. Though this study did not investigate the significance of these contextual differences in statistical ways, it detected differences in ethos that were related to these different contextual features. Some of these differences have already been mentioned above, and are more systematically explained below.

Between schools that differed in terms of *social class*, a first set of relevant differences had to do with relationships and behaviour at school. Children from higher classes, and their parents, did not appear to be as respectful towards the teachers as the children and the parents from working-class contexts, to whom teachers appeared as socially superior; upper-class children would often be impertinent towards their teachers, who might seem inferior to their well-educated, affluent parents. Other characteristics in children's behaviour seemed to relate to their social background: the working class children often swore at and hit each other, as these practices were common in their families and neighborhoods. Teachers not only felt unable to counteract these, but were also sometimes influenced accordingly: in the working-class school B, some teachers used slang like their pupils, whereas, according to teachers' comments, parents would not easily allow this in other areas. Especially with regard to discipline, punishing and hitting students was more common and acceptable in the lower-class school than in the others, because the working-class, non-educated parents themselves frequently used such methods. Another difference concerned attitudes to religion: the lower-class community of school A was more positive towards religion than the middle- or upper-class contexts of the other schools. Emphasis on academic success and competition seemed to distinguish, to some extent, schools of all social backgrounds, probably due to the market value that is attached to education in society at large; it should be noted, though, that academic pressure and competitiveness were magnified in the case of the school C, whose students had to come up to the high expectations of their well-educated, affluent parents.

Between the *private* school A and the four *state* schools, a first visible difference had to do with the fact that the private school had statements on values and aims, which were prominent in the prospectus and other school documents, whereas the state schools did not advertise any values and did not appear to be concerned to do so. A relevant and deeper difference had to do with the need of the private school A to have a good reputation so as to maintain and increase its clientele; thus, high academic emphasis was a prevalent feature of the whole school. In practice, this would often function at the expense of the timetabled moral, social and citizenship education, as well as of any relevant discussions and non-academic activities. The other schools, apart from school C that had a strong academic tradition, did not have additional reasons, beyond preparing students well for secondary education, to emphasize academic success. Moreover, the dependence of the private school on clients explained my observations that parents were treated politely, and as partners in the education of children. By contrast, in the other three Athens state schools, where the teachers were civil servants, and paid by the state, they would often express more openly what they did not like about parents, and the tensions caused might influence the work that the school did on values.

Between the *village* school and the four *urban* ones, a first difference concerned the relationship of the school to the community. The fact that school E and its pupils were considered to determine the future of the village meant that the school enjoyed the support of the community; moreover, the villagers gladly participated in school life, and the children were encouraged to participate in the community's life. Thus, the school was not tied to academic success only; this also related to the fact that many children could become productive and prosperous citizens by undertaking the rural business of their families, and did not feel the need to study to get a good job. In these circumstances, teachers did not exercise high academic pressure to their students, which meant that academic stress and competitiveness were not encouraged; there was also more time for students' active participation in non-academic activities. Another difference between the pupils in the urban setting and those in the village was that the latter had space in the open to play together; they also had free time, given the limited academic pressure, while the lifestyle of the village was generally relaxed and sociable. In this context, the village pupils seemed to have developed as more sociable and happy children, with fewer behaviour and discipline problems than most city children. Moreover, the traditional society of the village, more respectful to religion and its moral values than the urban Athens society, supported the status of religious messages and religious activities in the school life.

Another contextual difference that also emerged as important, though it was not considered when selecting the cases, was the *size* of schools and classrooms. This appeared to influence the development of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, as well as discipline matters and approaches to pedagogy and student participation. At school A, where there were thirty students in each class, it was difficult for classroom teachers to approach adequately each pupil, in academic and non-academic terms: 'You have to care for both the individual child and the whole class; you cannot do so every day' (teacher R). Teacher A guiltily told me: 'sometimes I go home, and I think that I did not notice some children'. By contrast, at school D, where students were organised in six class groups of not more than twenty, the teachers said that the small size helped to create a 'family-like' atmosphere in both the classrooms and the whole school, while they also seemed to know much about their students' backgrounds. At the rural school E, the small number of pupils per class (not more than eleven) facilitated the development of close teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, and also enabled the development of democratic pedagogical approaches, as well as the participation of students in non-academic activities. It has been considered (see, for example, Clarke, 1981; Glass et al., 1982; Heywood, 1992; Martin-Reynolds & Reynolds, 1991) that in smaller schools and classrooms it is easier for teachers, students and parents to relate to each other and to understand each other's needs and problems, while discipline is easier to keep. Sizer (1992,

1996) underlined, with reference to secondary schools, the estrangement between teachers and students in large classes, and suggested that caring for pupils properly cannot occur when teachers teach more than eighty pupils per week. Some more recent research by Blatchford and Martin (1998) indicated that the number of pupils may not always be very important in terms of effects on children, because teachers with large classes attempt to compensate for the possibly negative effects; however, these efforts adversely affect teachers' morale, enthusiasm and stress; thus, the ethos at classroom and school level can be harmed.

Overall, contextual differences of schools in terms of social class, state or private ownership, rural or urban surroundings, as well as size, account to some extent for differences in the ethos of the schools. This pinpoints the impact of background characteristics of the schools on their ethos. Teachers should be aware of this impact, because teachers who ignore the background characteristics of their students – such as their language and the customs of their homes and communities - may approach their students in ways that have no effect. Evidently, teachers need, to some extent, to be acquainted with their students' background; this issue is further explored when discussing relationships with parents.

This point concludes the discussion of the school's social context, as well as of all three levels of classroom, the whole school and the school's social context. The next section discusses ethos as developing through all these levels.

***Synopsis: The Classroom, the Whole School, and the School's Social Context***

In the above three sections on the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context, I have not presented three separate kinds of ethos, that is, those of the classroom, the whole school and the school's social context. I have discussed *levels* that are inextricably related to each other, and should not be considered in isolation from the others, for the simple reason that a classroom belongs to a school and a school belongs to a society. Moreover, as was shown, even when one of these levels operates differently from the other two, the others often influence it; for example, when a classroom teacher opposes some dominant features of the whole school, he/she still behaves in relation to what is the case at the school, and still follows some of its rules.

Presenting the three levels under separate headings serves analytical and descriptive purposes and is not intended to suggest any classification or clear distinctions. Careful reading of the above three sections indicates that the analysis of ethos into levels implies a *synthesis*: it is not the ethos of the classroom or the whole school or the school's social context that should be considered only, but ethos as emerging through their interaction. Moreover, none of them can be considered as autonomous; for example, the ethos that characterises the whole school is strongly affected by the

ethos that distinguishes its various classrooms. Thus, it would be simplistic and unrealistic to mention only the ethos of the classroom or the ethos of the whole school, without bearing in mind that each of them is influenced by the others. I would also suggest that the term 'school ethos' that is mostly frequently used in the literature should be reconsidered: school ethos can be taken to represent the ethos of the whole school, while there are the levels of the classroom and the school's social context that help to constitute it.

The data indicated that the three levels at which ethos appeared to develop were interrelated in different ways: among them, sometimes there was an alliance, or a common route; sometimes there was a tension, which could lead to a negotiation; there could also be a struggle of one to counteract the other. The following examples can illustrate these phenomena. Teachers V and P at school D worked consistently towards establishing and maintaining care and peace in teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships; this fitted in with the lack of academic pressure at their school, and its family-like atmosphere. In other cases, school conditions were less favourable: teacher A at school A, who also worked on the quality of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, felt pressured by the highly academic school she worked in; though she did not appear to conform fully to these pressures, she would feel guilty about her 'deviation' and would not openly fight against them, at least verbally. Pressures and influences of various kinds could be exercised by the school's social context too. At school C, where children generally performed successfully but were competitive with each other, as well as frequently impertinent towards teachers, teacher E often said desperately that, despite her efforts, she could not counteract the problems in the behaviour of 'ill-bred children'. The ethos which she sought to establish in her classroom appeared to be counteracted by the ways in which children were brought up in their families and social contexts. I was interested to note, though, that ten out of her thirty pupils wrote (in their essays for me) that they were being educated into good behaviour; thus, she might have struggled against the prevalent ethos more effectively than she thought.

With reference to these three levels, a question might be which of them is most influential. This depends on the circumstances. For example, in cases when the Head and the community are estranged from what goes on in classrooms, or when the teachers work in isolation from each other, or when little work on values is done at whole school level, the messages that are offered in classrooms can be very influential. At the same time, there are some influences related to wider social values, such as viewing education in career-oriented and competitive ways, which are deeply rooted in parents and students and cannot be easily counteracted by classroom teachers, though they can be challenged to some extent. In the light of these considerations, what may be the most important point is not what the outcomes of these tensions are, or which level turns out to be most

influential. It is the interactions between these levels that are important, because there is an on-going movement between them, which shapes both these levels and the ethos itself. This makes ethos complex and non-static; pressures, differences, and tensions have to be faced and negotiated. Thus, discussing ethos requires examining its levels and the shifting scenery of their interactions.

After discussing the notion of ethos at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context, I go on to discuss the features of ethos, at these levels, which emerged across cases as critical for the development of moral, social and citizenship education.

**Features of Ethos**

The features of ethos that I distinguished and investigated in this study emerged during my immersion in the unique context of each school, as appearing to playing an important role in shaping the ethos and students' personal development. These features also emerged, to a greater or lesser extent, when comparing across cases during the fieldwork and the analysis. To distinguish these features, I was also guided by previous research in the field, which referred to ethos as being shaped by key aspects, factors or features such as teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, pedagogy, modes of discipline and control, and student participation. I would suggest that if I had conducted longer-term and more in-depth fieldwork, I could distinguish further features of ethos, or sub-categories, such as the issues of praise, reward, and punishment in teacher-pupil relationships, which my findings across some cases suggested.

As can be seen in the five chapters presenting the data, the features that I distinguished were not always or completely the same in all five schools, though there were often important similarities. For example, I examined academic emphasis in all schools as forming an essential feature of their ethos, but the relationship of discipline to moral behaviour emerged as an important feature particularly in school A. The features that I detected and examined were presented in each case study chapter, and are also presented below, under themes such as 'student participation' or 'teacher-pupil relationships'. Separation under headings occurred for organisational and analytic reasons, and should not suggest that these features can be understood independently from each other. For example, limited participation of students in the school and community life may relate to other features of the ethos such as high academic emphasis, authoritarian modes of management and control at school, or lack of communication with the parents and the community.

***Academic Emphasis***

High academic emphasis and concentration on further education and professional success can define the school, in children's minds, as an institution that mainly promotes academic success.

For example, a pupil at school A, which had a strong academic profile, wrote: 'When I consider again what school is for me, I think it is homework I have to do.' Thinking of school as mainly concerning academic work and success relates to cultivating utilitarian attitudes towards education: 'I read so as to learn a lot and get a good job later' (anonymous, school C). In this context, any work that the school does on values may be underestimated or put aside, to save energy and time for academic tasks. In the cases which I explored, high academic emphasis appeared to be at the expense of moral, social and citizenship education in certain ways. Firstly, academic pressure appeared to reduce the teaching time and the status of the timetabled subjects of moral, social and citizenship education, such as RE and SCE. This especially happened in the highly academic school C; even in School A, that had some distinctive religious features, the high academic pressure made teachers often take teaching time from RE for other subjects. Secondly, this pressure left in these two schools little scope for discussing, in class time, moral and socio-political issues. The devaluation of the subjects of moral, social and citizenship education has been discussed in the literature (see, for example, Apple, 1979; A. Hargreaves et al., 1988; Torney-Purta et al., 1999), along with the value attached to subjects that are considered to have greater economic utility (e.g. IT and Mathematics). In this way, features of the broader social context seriously influence the teaching of the curriculum.

Another way in which high academic emphasis can function at the expense of children's moral and social development is that it can make students develop excessive feelings of competitiveness and aspiration for high grades.

***Competitiveness***

As was shown in most of the case studies, children were likely to develop competitive feelings and attitudes towards their peers as regards academic performance, particularly grading. This happened both at the working-class school B, where the academic level of students and parents was generally low, and at school C, whose middle- or upper-class students performed very well. Teachers in all schools said that children's competitiveness about grades had to do with parental influences. The intensity of competitiveness varied among schools, and this had much to do with pupils' social background and community influences. At school C, as suggested by the teachers there, pupils competed strongly with each other and longed for high grades, due to influences, if not pressures, from their well-educated, middle- or upper-class parents, who wanted their children to succeed academically and professionally. This could be seen in the children's views; when I asked the grade 6 pupils in this school to write about the school's contribution to their lives, most of them answered in ways similar to this:

> 'The school offers me knowledge so that I can find easily a very good job in the future. For the reason that I want this a lot, I read a lot so as to acquire as much knowledge as possible.'

In the other four schools which I examined, children expressed career aspirations more mildly; overall, they appeared to be less competitive too. At the rural school, children had future occupational options that did not require academic success, and did not develop such competitiveness. Thus, the extent of children's competitiveness and longing for high grades had much to do with influences from the ethos of their social context.

Some teachers suggested that beyond community influences, broader influences were involved. Teacher D at the rural school, whose community did not emphasise academic success, talked about the general psychological characteristics of parents:

> 'Parents care for *grading*, *even if* they don't care much for education, because this is clearly their *selfishness*, an excessive and bad kind of selfishness.'

Teacher E (school C) explained the situation with reference to the modern times:

> 'It's the competitive climate of *our days*. Parents come here and ask whether their child got 10 out of 10, not if he really learnt anything. Parents are displeased if they hear that another child is better than their child.'

Teachers at schools B and E explained the situation with reference to Greek society's valuing of academic success. Some children told me that their parents rewarded them with presents when they performed well; 'children have learnt the market rules of giving and taking', teacher R at school A said. Though it is true that Greek parents attach great value to academic credentials as facilitating professional success (see, OECD, 1997), this phenomenon can be met in other counties too. Labaree (1997) and Starratt (1994), in the US context, noted the strong competitiveness and the chase for grades and credentials, and they discussed how education becomes increasingly valued for providing students with credentials rather than with the moral, social and political capacities required for a healthy society. Kelly (1998), in the UK context, also noted the competition and individualism in the school's hidden curriculum, suggesting that it is difficult, if not impossible, to discourage these elements in a school when they flourish in society.

I should note that the above findings concern primary schools, and not secondary ones, which are generally said to be more individualistic and academically oriented than primary schools, where care for others and group spirit are expected to be valued (Howe, 1987; Stoll, 1999). Probably, primary schools receive pressure to resemble the secondary ones, so that the transition to the latter will occur successfully. This continuity, as A. Hargreaves and colleagues (1996) noted, is not always desirable, because primary education is the level of education where less exam-driven approaches are expected to flourish. Generally, when grades and career prospects are foregrounded,

the problem is that education as a personal process is changed into the pursuit of extrinsic rewards, while its moral and socio-political aspects are devalued.

The attitudes of teachers themselves towards children's competitiveness and pursuit of grades should be considered. Though many teachers complained to me about these attitudes of their students, I sometimes, while observing classes, saw teachers feeding the assessment- and career-driven thinking of children. For example, the Head of school D often spoke to pupils as follows:

> 'Written expression is important; wherever you go, you will be asked to write, even in a factory job.'

The Head most probably sought to make children more diligent rather than make them learn for the sake of getting a job. Possibly, parents often speak to their children in this way to motivate them; however, such comments can make children associate school mainly with preparation for getting a job. At the same time, I was interested to note that many teachers often attempted to resist the individualistic and competitive attitudes of their pupils. For example, at school A, which greatly emphasised academic excellence, I noted that at grade 3, some pupils helped each other while their teacher was testing them. On mentioning this to their teacher (D), she said:

> 'These are the results of the efforts of a whole year. There is still competition among the pupils, but not as strong as it was at the beginning of the year, when it was terrible. I had to struggle a lot.'

This comment indicates the influence of efforts that a teacher can make. Other examples of teachers who tried to counteract their students' competitiveness are offered by teachers D (school B) and V (school D), who consistently tried to restrain their students from commenting negatively on their classmates' performance.

***Pedagogy***

Competitiveness seemed to influence pedagogy as well. Teachers at the first four schools that I examined said that children's competitive attitudes and poorly developed social ability hindered the development of group-centred pedagogical approaches. They particularly mentioned, and I observed too, that the children's tendency to favour themselves and to speak their own views hindered the development of whole-class discussions. These difficulties, in combination with the fact that in the Greek context there are prescribed curricula and textbooks to be covered, hindered the development of non-didactic teaching approaches. Thus, it was whole-class teaching that was mostly used. Though quality whole-class teaching has its merits and should be frequently used (see Gipps, 1992), students' interaction with their classmates and their teacher is essential. Especially for education into democratic citizenship, participatory rather than instructional teaching methods help students develop the skills (e.g. of discussion) and attitudes (e.g. respect for other views) that democratic deliberation and participation require (W. Carr, 1991).

It appeared that when the number of pupils per classroom was small and the classroom atmosphere had a more family-like tone (e.g. in the rural school E and in some classrooms at School D), classroom discussions and collaborative efforts could develop more successfully. Nonetheless, teachers need not wait until they have a small classroom to help children practise discussing and co-operating with others. In larger classrooms, a good start can be made - as shown in the case of some teachers at schools A, B and E - when students co-operate together in non-academic activities, where the atmosphere is more relaxed, the time pressure may be less, and no grading is involved. The problem was that in most schools academic pressure often left little time for such activities; the rural school was an exception.

I noted that teacher M at school D - where academic emphasis was high and there were thirty pupils per class - kept training her six-year-old pupils to help each other, while frequently intervening to help them learn to work like that. Possibly, beyond any contextual constraints (such as size of classes or the competitive morale of pupils), the development of non-didactic teaching methods also has to do with the teachers' ability, experience and faith in working in this way. As Pring (1984) noted, organising discussions in class, especially stimulating deliberation at a high level of moral thinking, requires that teachers acquire the skills to do so. As some teachers who participated in this study noted, skill and experience in the development of non-didactic pedagogical approaches take time and efforts to develop.

Another feature of ethos that pedagogy relates to is student participation.

***Student Participation***

A basic way in which student participation can be promoted is through pedagogical approaches that encourage students' autonomy. In the five schools which I studied, when teacher-centred pedagogical approaches were mainly followed students were given little initiative in class. When more group-centred approaches and whole-class discussions developed, as happened mainly in schools D and E, students were given a voice and increased initiative.

Student participation can be promoted when encouraging students to participate in non-academic activities, which may relate to their classroom, school and community context. When academic emphasis is high, these activities are likely to be limited and/or structured by the teachers so as to save time. At the private school A and the upper-class school D, where there was access to a range of extra-curricular activities, students' active participation was limited due to academic pressure; for example, they would attend a theatre play for two hours, and then come back to school for class. As for school B, where students' academic level was generally low and the academic pressure was not of the same kind as in school A and C, teachers did not seem willing to spare time

and energy for non-academic activities; a basic reason was that this time could be used for lessons. By contrast, in the village school E, where there were also problems of poor performance, teaching time was often used for students' participation in non-academic activities (e.g. gardening), while all of them participated actively in the school celebrations, which were major social events for the whole village. Emphasis on non-academic activities, and students' participation in them, did not occur simply due to reduced academic pressure; importantly, this school was expected to bring liveliness to the village, whose future was seen in the pupils, no matter whether they would become farmers or university graduates. Thus, parents and teachers felt proud to see children active. Moreover, children's lifestyle - for example, their playing freely in the open - helped them develop as more active persons than their peers who lived a more limited life in Athens apartments. I also noted that the small number of students in this rural school ensured that they almost all participated in a range of activities, even if these were less impressive or 'cultured' than those in Athens schools; thus, what matters is not only the quality of the activities that students participate in, but also the extent of their participation.

Student participation could be also promoted in cases of misunderstandings and problems between pupils. Teacher D, who worked at the highly academic school A, frequently called on her nine-year-old pupils to become actively involved in the solution of their conflicts. When they came up with complaints about their classmates, she expected them to solve their problems at that moment. Initially, she told me, she had to intervene much, but later she did so much less; one day, at the end of the school year, she told me: 'I did not need to say anything; they solved the problem at the beginning of the Mathematics lesson without me'. It is suggested that direct pupil involvement in classroom life, where pupils explain their behaviour and discuss classroom rules and bad behaviour, makes discipline work best (Pickering, 1997). As shown elsewhere (see, for example, Foster-Allen, 1996) students can learn from practice in raising and discussing issues of concern in their relationships. As the above teacher said, 'Children are not as little as we think they are'. Through such participation, sharing of power occurs, while students' autonomy and understanding of both themselves and others are enhanced.

***Discipline***

Schools, like all organisations, need to be regulated so that justice and order are secured. A basic question is how this happens. Generally, it is very difficult to define in an overall acceptable way standards of good behaviour and discipline, as there are many factors to be considered, such as the age of the pupils, or the time of the day or year (e.g. Monday morning or Friday afternoon, the last day before holidays), or some of the values of the school context; the context is of great

importance (Munn, 1999). For this reason, it is not valid to compare the discipline kept in the five schools which I studied. There are, though, some points that emerged as important across cases.

One was that, as indicated in school A, children were annoyed by rules that were imposed on them without any negotiation or explanation, especially when they could not understand the meaning or intent of these rules. This appeared to underestimate their moral and logical sense. As Foster-Allen (1996) suggested, it is important that school rules are not oppressive and fossilized, but responsive to the needs of the children which they concern. Discussing rules with children also has to do with sharing power, which can make them feel responsible and think for themselves. As shown in some instances at school A, when rules are imposed without being discussed, children feel them as external orders that they may appear to respect' as long as they are supervised; when not, they can act differently, and if they are reprimanded for this, they receive it, as Midgley (1997) put it, as bad luck, reflecting that they will be more careful not to get caught next time.

There were some other discipline methods that I distinguished in some schools. One was the use of assessment as a mode of authority and control: in the strongly academically oriented school C, many teachers threatened disruptive children that they would give them a low grade; children, longing for high grades, would behave themselves after such warnings. As noted by Dwyer (1998), teachers can value and exploit their freedom to use grades as a reward, classroom control mechanism, and motivator of their students; this becomes more common when students and parents greatly value grades. Another discipline method was hitting students; this seemed to happen frequently in School A, clashing seriously with its religious values, as well as in School B, fitting in with the discipline methods of the non-educated parents of its pupils; in both schools, teachers said that parents used these methods. In the other schools that I examined, hitting appeared to be a method used rarely, while it was not a common tactic of these students' parents either. These schools recognised and reflected, to a great extent, the discipline methods of parents; parental use of violence might function, even subconsciously, as an excuse in teachers' minds. When parents did not use such methods, teachers were more hesitant to use them; for example, the Head of the rural school said that the parents did not hit their children and would not like this to happen at school. I was interested to note that even teachers who occasionally hit students appeared, theoretically, to disapprove of it; possibly, they could not control themselves in practice. Perhaps the most telling comment was made by teacher T (school E):

> 'Once I hit a child and I left a bruise on him that was visible for a week and I had to face it every day...'

It was not only the teacher but also the child who might not face this bruise easily. As Mitchell and Weber (1999) wrote, such incidents can damage not only teacher-pupil relationships but also

pupils' self-esteem. Though I met children (at schools A and B) who were hit and said that they were used to it, they may have said so to protect their pride; moreover, being hit is not a pleasant experience to get used to. Children could experience feelings of humiliation, which could remain, sometimes in a suppressed form, inside them, and have unpleasant future consequences. Moreover, such discipline methods intensify the inequity of power in teacher-pupil relationships, and can make pupils either increasingly submissive or aggressively rebellious.

Discipline methods were sometimes more democratic. At all the schools that I examined, some teachers held 'courts' or discussions, with a whole class or smaller groups of children, to solve discipline problems and children's conflicts. Through such procedures, the views of children were called to attention and taken into consideration to overcome tensions. The data demonstrated that they were able, with the help of their teachers, to discuss the problems in their relationships and reach some levels of agreement. Through such methods, their moral reasoning could develop while they learnt to take responsibility for their behaviour and talk. This is one strategy along some others (e.g. circle time) that can be used at classroom level to counteract the dark side of pupils' relationships (Munn, 1999). Moreover, as Haydon (1997, 1999) suggested, students' practice in discussing together can help them understand that there may be a considerable variety of views even in one classroom itself, while it can also help them clarify and test their own views, as well as understand those of others. Noddings (1992) noted that understanding both oneself and the others can help participants in dialogue to connect to each other, and may contribute to building caring relations. Another relevant point made by Noddings (1994) was that that many children and adolescents today lack opportunities to engage in real conversation with adults, with whom they mainly have only brief exchanges, which often consist in warnings and direct instruction; some teachers in this study made similar comments to me.

I was interested to note that some features of ethos and contextual factors could be related to the discipline problems and the discipline methods that characterised each school. For example, in schools D and E, which had a smaller size, less academic pressure, and a more family-like atmosphere inside and outside classrooms, discipline problems appeared to be less serious and easier to manage with discussions with pupils. Another example is that when the parents of the students used to discipline them by sometimes hitting them, teachers felt freer to do the same, while when parents did not do so, teachers were accordingly cautious.

A final point that I would suggest is that keeping discipline at school should not be equated with establishing high moral standards. As was noted with reference to some undisciplined pupils at school A, some children may not fit in well with the standards of behaviour at their school, but this may relate more to the limits of their conformity, rather than to their lack of moral and social

maturity. As Haydon (2000) suggested, there is morality in a narrow sense, where morality, and education for it, concern a system of constraints and norms, as well as morality and moral education in a broader sense, mostly concerning personal qualities. Though discipline is important, it does not embrace everything about morality. Moreover, it can be equated with rigidity, conformity, and lack of deeper moral insights among both pupils and teachers.

Of relevance to the issue of discipline is the relationship of parents to the school.

***Parents and School***

Many of the above features of ethos, at the level of the classroom, the school and the school's social context, relate closely to students' parents, in the sense that parents are a major source of influence on children's personal development and morale. The extent of parental influences depends on the circumstances and the issues involved; for example, parents had high academic expectations for children at school C, but not at the village school. Staying at five schools for an average of one month, I often felt that there were often tensions, more or less open, between parents and school. Acker (1999), in reviewing literature about parents and schools, claimed that parents are often problematic for schools; she avoided overgeneralising the category 'parents', and she considered how parents differ according to factors such as social class. Though there were such differences in the schools that I examined, they were not the only or most important ones; thus, it would be more accurate to illustrate differences rather than distinguish types.

In school A, which was private, the parents were treated politely, and the teachers did not express openly any opposition to them, probably because the parents were fee-paying clients. In the state school D, where many well-educated and middle- or upper-class parents generously provided the teachers with teaching resources - which facilitated teachers' work – teachers were grateful to parents for their help. Thus, when they did not feel comfortable with parents' frequent presence at school and interference in it, they could not express openly their discontent (although these teachers were hired and paid by the state, and not by any local authority or private body). For example, teacher M (grade 3) complained to me and her colleagues about parents whose children performed excellently, but who kept calling to ask about their children's progress; the teacher said that this enhanced students' stress and competitiveness, and also took up much of her time; however, she would not complain to parents about this. In the schools B and D, where parents hardly ever offered any materials to teachers, when the latter did not like something about parents' behaviour and involvement in school, they would more openly express their true feelings. I even heard some teachers saying that parents could withdraw their children from the school if they did not like something or someone there; teachers said so on the basis that they were hired and paid by the state,

and not by the parents, from whom they did not receive any material help. I thought that such tensions could make parents develop negative feelings towards the school and not recognise or support its work for students' personal development. Lack of support was sometimes mentioned and lamented by teachers, especially on discipline and behaviour issues; probably, this support was not very feasible when parents did not feel appreciated and liked by the teachers. The rural school was very different; the teachers enjoyed respect among the poorly educated villagers, who also saw in the school the future of their village, and would gladly participate in the celebrations which it organised.

Beyond the above differences, in all five schools, including the private school A, I heard teachers often blame parents for problems in children's social behaviour or academic performance. I also heard teachers saying that parents accused them in these respects. 'Parents are an eternal problem, at almost all schools', the Head of school D told me. I thought that accusations, or milder informal comments, that parents may articulate against their children's teachers, could be at the expense of teacher-pupil relationships. Not only children's respect for teachers can be marred, but tensions can also make teachers feel disrespected and not rewarded for their efforts. Moreover, any work that teachers might do on values would lack support or be underestimated by bitter parents.

Sammons and colleagues (1995), in a review of school effectiveness studies, suggested that the question of whether higher levels of parental involvement have an impact is a difficult one, as their involvement can mean a multitude of things in different contexts. I would suggest that well-intentioned parents can normally be of some help; for example, in school B, in a socially deprived area and where very few non-academic activities were organised for pupils, it was the parents who had organised the school library, as well as some celebrations (on Christmas and Halloween) for teachers, pupils, and their families, despite the efforts of teachers to keep them at distance.

The next two sections move to discussing the role of religion and politics in the ethos of the five schools I studied.

### *Religion*

The data indicated that religious values could leave their mark on the ethos at the levels of the classroom and the whole school. It was evident in some cases of teachers in schools A and D that teachers' Christian faith and moral values could make them consider and approach pupils as persons who should be respected and cared for. This was also pinpointed by a sign in the staffroom of school A: 'It were better for someone that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, *than that he should offend one of these little ones* (Luke, 17, 2)' (emphasis added). This sign also indicates that, at the level of the whole school, the religious and moral principles that a

school espouses, prescribe some expectations and standards in behaviour. For example, at school A, which had some distinctive religious features, I noted that the teachers would try to prevent pupils, in both classrooms and the playground, from developing attitudes of competitiveness or habits of swearing at and hitting each other, which were all contrary to the value statements and principles of the school. Thus, though the distinct religious principles of this school were often contradicted by authoritarian discipline methods, these principles also related to increased sensitivity to, and concern for, the quality of students' behaviour.

Religious values and ideas that permeate the ethos can touch upon children's sensitivities. This could be seen in the individual examples of two boys at school A, presented in chapter five. There were further indications that religion could especially touch children who were considered to be 'difficult' and 'undisciplined'. The Head of school C noticed: 'disturbed, or difficult, children find some rest in religion'. She said so with reference to a very undisciplined boy, who was quiet in church, for which he emphasised to me his fondness; I observed that he looked absorbed in RE classes as well. I remembered this boy while researching school E, where I met a boy who kept expressing his dislike of anything related to school, except for RE, which he considered important 'as talking about Christ'. This interest may develop as part of personal inclinations and sensitivities, as well as family and community influences. Coles' (1992) research found that the development of interest in religion, and the construction of religious ideas and questions, concern an important aspect of young children's identity. As to how children's interest in religion and its values related to their behaviour, this is difficult to consider because it is not known how children would behave in the absence of any religious influences from the ethos and the curriculum.

As regards participation in religious rituals, such as morning prayer and attendance of church service, it should be first noted that these occur within the confessional approach that religious instruction follows in the Greek context, where the Orthodox Christian religion is the official one, and familiarisation with it is among the aims of Greek education at various levels (see relevant documentation in chapter three). As regards church-going, it appeared that the services had to be explained to children so that they could be understood and respected; the contribution of the classroom teacher (for example, teacher D in school A) or a priest of the church (remember schools C, D and E) appeared to be helpful in this respect. Without such explanations, religious rituals appeared to be tiresome for children; overemphasis on them, such as attending church more than once a month at school A, appeared to be tiresome too.

Beyond any personal interest of children in religion, their attitudes to it - particularly its taught contents, its values and its rituals - appeared to be more positive in contexts that were more positive towards religion, such as the traditional village society of school E or the working-class

community of school B. I discuss further the role of religion in the schools which I examined when presenting, as part of the curriculum, the RE subject.

The next section moves from religion to politics.

*Politics*

A first way in which politics could influence the ethos was by messages and values that were articulated by teachers during lessons. I was interested to note that most teachers had suggested, when asked whether politics was discussed in class, that politics should have no place at school. Perhaps, in their mind, the discussion of socio-political issues was identified with party politics or indoctrination. However, as shown in the case of teacher P at school C, critical socio-political questions could be raised without involving propaganda or party politics. Moreover, in lessons that I observed, I noted that some teachers who said that they did not discuss politics in class, sometimes did so (remember teacher V at school B, or the Head at school C). Possibly, these teachers did not realise it; perhaps, they did not reflect adequately on their teaching and/or the nature of politics. It would be better if they had done so, because this could help improve the quality of their political talk and reasoning. Realising the political nature of one's comments and articulating them with explicit arguments, are important; otherwise, indoctrination may occur. The Head at school C, who once spoke explicitly against US politics, justified her comments, while also saying that she wanted to let children decide what was politically correct.

The school's contextual features could influence the treatment of politics. For example, at the private school A, teachers avoided speaking politically in and out of class, and also restrained students from doing so, because fee-paying parents might be annoyed by political comments which they might not like, and the school's reputation could be accordingly damaged. At the rural school, which belonged to a community that was marked with party political fanaticism, the teachers tried to be completely apolitical in class. Outside class, teachers of different contexts were politicised differently, and this could influence their attitudes to politics in class; for example, at the working-class school B, the teachers, who lived either in the school's deprived area or nearby, appeared to be more overtly politicised, in that in the staffroom one could occasionally find newsletters condemning the government's financial and educational policies, while in the other four schools the newsletters were much more 'neutral'. The school's context could influence students as well; for example, at school B, the working-class pupils appeared to have developed a taste for left-wing parties as well as sensitivities to those in need. Overall, it seems to be inevitable that teachers and students are sometimes not neutral in a political, or even party-political sense; nevertheless, this can become dangerous when persons at higher posts, such as headteachers or school advisors, allow

political messages to be passed on to children in indirect ways, as happened with the portrayal of political signs on classroom noticeboards at the rural school E.

With this discussion of politics (which I later continue when presenting the SCE subject), I conclude the consideration of the features of ethos that appeared to be of relevance to moral, social and citizenship education in the schools which I studied. I proceed to the second part of this chapter, which addresses the taught curriculum.

## THE CURRICULUM

I explored the taught curriculum of moral, social and citizenship education by examining, in order to limit the focus, only the teaching of the subjects of Religious Education (RE) and 'Social and Citizenship Education' (SCE); I observed classes in RE at grades 4, 5 and 6, and classes in SCE at grades 5 and 6 (it is designed for these grades only).

### Status

Before discussing RE and SCE separately, it is helpful to explore the status assigned to the two subjects by students; in this respect, it is illuminating to cite the following statistical evidence from students' responses to the questionnaire's semantic differential scale (statistical data can be seen in Appendix 4):

Table 6. Children's rating of their school subjects

| Subject | *Mean* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Extent of assessment | Extent of importance | Extent of importance for parents | Extent of usefulness in the job market | Extent of usefulness in secondary school |
| Foreign Language | 5.32 | 6.60 | 5.64 | 6.19 | 6.50 |
| Greek | 5.49 | 6.21 | 5.41 | 5.53 | 6.28 |
| History | 5.63 | 6.35 | 5.47 | 4.56 | 5.95 |
| Mathematics | 5.28 | 6.39 | 5.64 | 6.22 | 6.59 |
| Physics | 5.72 | 6.35 | 5.36 | 5.15 | 6.28 |
| *RE* | *4.68* | *5.78* | *4.81* | *3.81* | *5.02* |
| *SCE* | *4.64* | *5.11* | *4.61* | *4.37* | *4.82* |

[Note: In the semantic differential scale of the questionnaire (as can be seen in Appendix 3), point 1 represents the minimum, and point 7 represents the maximum.]

As shown in this table, RE and SCE are the subjects which children considered as the least heavily assessed, the least important generally, the least important for their parents, as well as the

least useful in the job market and the secondary school. At the same time, SCE and RE were considered as the two easiest subjects (the mean was 6.17 for SCE and 6.38 for RE, as compared to 4.60 for Mathematics, which was considered as the most difficult of all). I was interested to see the results of statistical correlation tests, which suggested that some relationships developed. A first example, which indicates the impact of assessment, is that the extent to which a subject was assessed, and the importance assigned to it by students, were correlated significantly (i.e. for Physics, the Spearman correlation was significant at the 0.05 level, while for History and Foreign Language it was significant at the 0.01 level; results of statistical correlation tests can be seen in Appendix 4). There was also a statistically significant relationship between the general importance assigned to some subjects by students and the importance assigned to them by parents; for all subjects, the respective Spearman correlations were significant at the 0.01 level. A statistically significant relationship was found between the importance assigned to subjects and their perceived usefulness in the job market; for example, for Mathematics and Foreign Language, the respective Spearman correlations were significant at the 0.01 level. Overall, this statistical evidence partly indicates why RE and SCE were often attributed a lower status; qualitative accounts for this – articulated by pupils, teachers and parents – can be seen when reading the respective sections of the five case studies. A first indication for the lower status of RE and SCE was offered by the prescribed timetable for Greek primary education (portrayed in chapter three, table 1), which showed that little teaching time, as compared to other subjects, was assigned to RE and SCE.

This statistical and non-statistical evidence about the lower status of RE and SCE can be largely explained by the fact that Greek society, as discussed in chapter three, greatly values academic success and sees it as the main avenue towards social and professional success; as RE and SCE have traditionally very little connection with the examinations that lead to higher education, they commonly enjoy lower status. As discussed elsewhere (for example, Gipps, 1994; Labaree, 1997) education's exchange value generates a reluctance to take seriously subjects that do not contribute importantly to certification and future careers. The above data indicate that these values and attitudes can pervade primary education; this was also shown above in the case of competitiveness, and suggests that primary education can merge with secondary education, which is more examination-oriented. It also indicates that some features of the ethos of the broader society can function at the expense of the taught curriculum of moral, social and citizenship education.

These general comments cannot counteract the fact that, in this study, the status and teaching of RE and SCE could vary across different cases of classroom teachers, schools, and school contexts.

**SCE subject**

Students' questionnaire responses indicated not only that they generally assigned a low status to SCE, but also that, overall, they found it as the least interesting of all (mean = 4.47, as compared to 5.81 for RE, and 6.35 for Physics, which was considered as the most interesting subject). I thought that the lack of interest in SCE could be partly explained by the lower status itself of the subject; teachers may not have spared much energy, time and inspiration for a subject that both they and the students considered less important. Teachers' lack of enthusiasm can also explain why, as suggested by the lessons which I observed in all five schools, they taught mostly from the prescribed textbook: their discussion-based lessons[1] relied mostly on the questions in the students' textbook. Though the one-textbook rule that characterises Greek school practice may be a reason for this, it may not be the only one; teachers could lack interest in going beyond the textbook, as happened, for example, in the case of teacher A at school B. It should also be noted that the questionnaire responses of students suggested that, overall, they considered the SCE textbook as the one they liked least (mean = 5.17, as compared to 6.28 for the Physics' textbook, which was the most popular, and 5.81 for RE). Moreover, the relationship between the extent to which students considered SCE as interesting, and the extent to which they liked the SCE textbook, was statistically significant (the respective Spearman correlation was significant at the 0.01 level). The following table, that presents the extent of students' interest in SCE, and of the importance they attached to it, offers additional information about different teachers.

Table 7. Interest in, and importance of, SCE

| School | Teacher | Mean: Interest in SCE | Mean: Importance of SCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| A (private) | S | 3.48 | 4.87 |
| | (the same) | 3.48 | 5.00 |
| B (working-class) | A | 2.93 | 4.15 |
| | V | 5.87 | 5.40 |
| C (upper-class) | A | 4.21 | 5.00 |
| D (middle-class) | P | 6.05 | 6.25 |
| E (rural school) | T | 4.86 | 5.29 |
| | D | 5.22 | 4.89 |

[Note: In the semantic differential scale of the questionnaire (as can be seen in Appendix 3), point 1 represents the minimum, and point 7 represents the maximum.]

As shown in this table, within the same school - beyond any contextual differences - children may feel differently towards SCE, depending on the classroom teacher; at school B, I observed teacher

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[1] As explained in chapter three, the relevant teacher's textbook recommends that whole-class and group discussions should be used rather than whole class teaching.

A teaching SCE by mostly using the open textbook, while I saw teacher V holding whole-class discussions, trying to stimulate children's interest; the above table indicates that the pupils of these different teachers thought of SCE very differently. The table also shows that the pupils of teacher P at school C found SCE more interesting and important than their peers in all the other schools; how this occurred is explored later in this chapter.

As was suggested by my observations of SCE lessons and my reading of the textbooks for grades 5 and 6 so as to prepare for some teaching, the textbook lessons largely concerned factual information about politics, such as how the parliament is elected and works, or human and legal rights. This emphasis on knowledge acquisition was also evident in the analysis of the verbs used in the objectives of the SCE curriculum in grade 6 (see chapter three). A problem with such approaches to citizenship education is that, as suggested by Arthur & Davison (2000), passing information to students is not sufficient, because it constitutes a passive approach to democratic citizenship, which also requires the development of relevant values, skills and attitudes.

A relevant issue is that, as previously discussed with reference to politics, many teachers avoided touching upon critical socio-political issues in SCE lessons, for fear that they would speak politically. Teachers had some grounds for such avoidance – the situations for the private school A and the rural school E were previously described. These could prevent teachers from feeling free to raise broader socio-political issues, which could make their lessons more interesting for children. Under these circumstances, there was also little scope for developing any "reformist" and "radical" approaches to citizenship education, in which the socio-political structures are critically examined and called into question (see, for example, Bottery, 1992). A different example was offered by teacher P (at school D), who expressed to me his interest in SCE, and typically raised in it critical contemporary issues - such as racism, injustice, and economic corruption. His pupils became very interested in SCE, which appeared to acquire a high status in this class (see table 7). I was interested to note that this teacher raised socio-political questions during other lessons as well, and that he also spared time to confront his pupils' behaviour problems; in this respect, he had some moral and social sensitivities that he openly expressed as a teacher. At the same time, the ethos that he established in his classroom was compatible with the way he taught SCE; thus, the ethos at classroom level would be 'home' for the taught curriculum.

**RE subject**

Comments by teachers and parents, and the questionnaire responses of students, indicated that, generally, RE was generally considered as less important than subjects such as Mathematics and Languages (see table 6). The data indicated, though, that the contribution of classroom teachers

and influences from the school's social context, could make students see RE as interesting and important. The role of the classroom teacher is clarified by a comment that teachers at school A made: 'whether children like RE or not depends on how you do the lesson', adding that the religious ethos that a school may espouse, or the family values, may have nothing to contribute in this respect. The community context could also make students develop positive attitudes towards religious instruction; for example, at the village school E, whose community context adhered to religious ideals, RE had a high status; it also had a fairly high status at school B, due to similar community influences. Statistical information verified this; the Spearman correlation between the extent of importance attached to RE by students, and by parents, was significant at the 0.01 level. By contrast, at school C, where parents and students associated education mainly with academic and professional achievements, students saw RE mostly as a 'second-rate' subject. I noted in this school, as well as in some other schools to some extent, that attributing to RE a lower status did not always, or necessarily, mean not liking it. For example, a pupil at school B wrote in the questionnaire: 'A lesson I consider as less important is RE because it's not useful for any job; well, it's a very nice subject, of course'.

Across the five case studies, I detected a number of reasons why children could like and/or think highly of RE. Personal interest in religion was one: 'RE is special and I am interested in Christ', a boy at school E wrote. Another reason was that children considered that instruction about Christianity could help them to become better persons:

> 'The subject I consider as most important of all is RE, because it helps me distinguish bad from good' (anonymous, School B).
> 'The subject that I love best is RE because it talks about Christ and shows to us to love and not to hate' (Vasilis, School E).

When children wrote about their school subjects, the connection of religious teaching with moral thinking and behaviour appeared again - for example, 'RE helps me become a better person'. These views show that RE can relate to students' moral development. It has been suggested that religion can contribute to discussions on morality, and that religious faith can encourage morally good behaviour (Priestley, 1987), despite the fact that religion and morality can be considered as different and independent ways of interpreting experience (see, for example, Hirst, 1974).

Another issue that I detected was children's curiosity about religious matters with metaphysical dimensions, such as life after death. I either witnessed such enquiries (especially at school B), or teachers (e.g. at schools A and D) mentioned them. As Coles' (1992) research found, young children can raise noticeable religious, or spiritual, questions that may surprise the adults, who may not encourage or awaken them. It remains the responsibility of teachers to control the class so that such questions and issues do not overshadow the moral and social dimensions of RE,

as often happened at school B. It is also the teachers' responsibility to be prepared, to some extent, to discuss such enquiries from pupils. Facing them has to do with education; the Head of school D, who held a Theology degree, said that 'the teacher should be well educated enough to teach RE'.

Teachers' adequate preparation to teach RE could also counteract the danger of indoctrination, which was apparent, in some cases, at school A. The facts that, as discussed in chapter three, 97% of the Greek population profess Christianity and that the Greek curricula and the textbooks of RE follow a confessional approach, do not justify indoctrination and discrimination against those who may think and believe differently. As teacher D (school B) suggested:

> 'I start from the fact that we are Orthodox Christians, and we seek to know how we believe in our God; that's my job... However, children must learn that one can believe anything one wants. It's fascistic not to think so.'

Such attitudes have to do with respect and freedom, which are essential moral qualities.

Overall, as regards investigating the RE subject as part of this study, what may be the most prominent issue is the relationship that it appeared to have, as shown above, to personal moral qualities. In this respect, it is worth citing the view of teacher E (school A) who emphasised practice rather than teaching:

> 'It is better when the teacher does not say a lot, for example, on loving each other, but inspires an atmosphere of love; children feel it. When children hear a lot, they learn a little.'

As shown in chapter five, children at school A often felt tired and bored when hearing much about religion, especially in a preaching way. Teacher R (from that school) noted:

> 'Children become morally good from what they both see and hear. If I teach them in RE that they should be peaceful and I do the opposite in practice, what's the point? They pay more attention to the fact that I face soberly and calmly the evil of others, than to my saying in RE that they should do so.'

This comment provides a lead to the last part of this chapter, which brings together the ethos and the curriculum as regards moral, social and citizenship education, discussing why the two of them are not often separate, or separable.

## THE ETHOS AND THE CURRICULUM

This section suggests that ethos and the curriculum are not separable entities. A first indication of their interrelationship can be seen in that, as shown above, the roles of religion and politics in shaping the ethos cannot be discussed adequately without referring to the relevant curriculum areas, while the latter could not be adequately explored without referring to religion and

politics as influencing the ethos. This study offered specific examples of how the ethos can affect the curriculum, and how the curriculum can affect the ethos.

As regards the *influence of ethos upon the curriculum*, indications of this were detected at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context. At *classroom* level, in the case of teaching RE, it was shown that teachers who were personally interested in religion, and its moral and social relevance, taught RE by relating it to moral and social issues and to children's experiences. Some of these teachers also spoke in ways that demonstrated their personal involvement, which frequently made children more interested and involved, but sometimes raised the danger of indoctrination (as in the case of some teachers at school A). In the case of teaching SCE, there were teachers who sought to be completely apolitical, avoided raising critical questions, and did not manage to make the subject interesting for the children (as in school E or school A); by contrast, teacher P at school D, who was very interested in moral and social issues, could raise relevant questions, not only when teaching SCE, and evoked the interest and the critical thinking of his students. As A. Hargreaves (1994) noted, teachers do not simply deliver the curriculum; they filter and reinterpret it according to the influence of their backgrounds and beliefs. Some features of ethos at *whole school* level could also leave their mark on the taught curriculum. For example, the private school A, which sought to be apolitical so as not to displease parents, generally assigned a lower status to the SCE subject, and did not want any critical socio-political questions to occur during the teaching of this subject or others. Moreover, the high academic emphasis that characterised this school, as well as school C, was a basic reason why little time and low status were given to the teaching of SCE, and sometimes of RE. The *school's social context* could also be very influential. For example, in the rural school E, which belonged to a community that was marked by party political fanaticism, critical socio-political issues had to be left out of the teaching of SCE and other subjects, because they might trigger misunderstandings and disputes. Another example concerns RE: in the schools B and E, the traditional values of their contexts oriented students positively towards religious instruction. By contrast, when the school's social context related education strongly to the acquisition of high grades, as happened mainly at school C, and to a smaller extent at the other three Athens schools, the subjects of RE and SCE were seen as less important than Mathematics and Languages which were seen as more useful in the job market.

As regards the *influence of curriculum upon the ethos*, this could be seen, at first, in the fact that there was prescribed material to be taught, both in the area of moral, social and citizenship education and in other curriculum areas. This had a number of implications. Firstly, it could frame, to some extent, the scope of moral, social and citizenship education within some subjects and their boundaries; for example, RE could be seen as the main vehicle for moral education, or SCE could

be seen as the main vehicle for raising socio-political issues. Secondly, the need for covering the prescribed curriculum contents for each grade could feed academic pressure, which could reduce the time for non-academic activities, off-task discussions on moral and social issues, or pedagogic approaches such as groupwork, which could all contribute to students' personal development – academic pressure had such outcomes in schools A and C. Another way in which the curriculum can influence the ethos is through the moral, religious and socio-political values that it incorporates; for example, the moral values included in RE lessons can promote, as was shown in the data, children's moral thinking and behaviour, which may have further positive implications for their behaviour at school as well as the school's ethos.

It can be argued that though the ethos and the curriculum interrelate as described above, they may split apart when contradictions develop between them. For example, at school A, the Head and the teachers who spoke of the Christian qualities of friendliness and compassion, sometimes hit students; such contradictions were often pinpointed by students, who would feel disappointment and confusion. It should be noted, though, that such contradictions largely develop not only between the ethos and the curriculum, but *within* each of them as well. For example, at school A, the religious values that clashed with authoritarian discipline methods, distinguished the ethos as much as they distinguished the taught curriculum. Thus, separation of ethos and curriculum was not complete again. Overall, in the above ways, and in other possible ways that this study has not detected, the taught curriculum and the ethos may be interwoven; this also suggests that the function and impact of each of them cannot be adequately understood without reference to the other.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN
# SOME IMPLICATIONS

This study explores the development of moral, social and citizenship education in the case of five Greek primary schools by examining both their ethos and curriculum. The study contributes to the understanding of ethos by examining it at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context, and by exploring the dynamics that develop between, and within, these levels. It also detects differences in the ethos across different school contexts, and illuminates how some features of it relate to students' moral and social development. The study also contributes to the understanding of the curriculum related to morals and civics, by indicating that this should not be considered as separate from the ethos. This final chapter reviews these contributions, which have been presented with examples from data in chapter ten, and articulates suggestions for reflection and further research. The claims which are made for these contributions are first presented.

## The Contributions of a Small-Scale Study

It may be argued that the Greek case studies in this research are distinct from other educational realities, and that this greatly reduces the capacity of this study to contribute to the broader field of moral, social and citizenship education. One distinctive feature is that in Greek primary education there are neither Ofsted inspectors nor external standard tests; however, as in other countries, there are mandatory textbooks and a national curriculum to be taught, while, as shown by the findings, many primary pupils and their parents already think of future examinations. Another difference is that some characteristics of the ethos of some of the schools I explored - such as disciplining students with corporal punishment at schools A, B and C - are neither evident nor allowed at schools elsewhere; nevertheless, they happen – for example, in Japan, hitting undisciplined students is not exceptional (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). In these respects, the Greek cases in this study may not be as different from other cases as may be initially thought. Moreover, as discussed in the methodology chapter, it is for the reader to look critically at the cases studied - which, in some respects, may be as typical or atypical as other cases - and to think about how they can relate to his/her own situation. It should also be noted that the five schools that I examined are not 'exceptional' cases in that they are not 'alternative' or 'pioneering' schools, with special programmes for morals and civics. Apart from the private school A that had some distinctive religious features, the other four were state schools that did not claim to do anything unusual in terms of moral, social and citizenship education. Finally, beyond any differences or similarities

among school practices across different countries, school contexts or schools, there are universal parameters as regards students' moral and social development, such as the need for, and importance of, respect in the relationships developed at school. By immersing myself in the context of these five schools, I developed some insights into the ethos and the curriculum that underlie moral, social and citizenship education, and I reflected on issues that could support or constrain its development. Although it is not possible to make too many generalisations from this exploratory, multi-case study research, it is possible to discuss implications that may be relevant to other schools with some common features.

## CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This part considers the contributions of the study, particularly as regards the notion of ethos, the differences in ethos that relate to the school's social context, the features of ethos, and the relationship that develops between the ethos and the curriculum. In the light of these contributions, suggestions are also articulated for reflection and further research.

### The notion of ethos

On reviewing previous studies at the outset of the study, I found that ethos was considered to be very influential on students' personal development but an agreed definition was elusive, while different synonyms were used for the concept. I wondered how successfully I could empirically explore an ambiguous concept. Some valuable guidance was offered by related literature that pinpointed some factors or aspects or features of ethos that could be explored (such as academic emphasis), as well as the role of the classroom teacher and wider social influences.

At the stage of data collection and analysis, I did not reach a definition of ethos, but I developed some insights into it and its relationship to moral, social and citizenship education. I found that, in all five schools, it was not sufficient or valid to talk about school ethos, because what developed at these schools was ethos at the three levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the social context of the school. These were not three different kinds of ethos - one for the classroom, one for the whole school and one for the school's social context. Ethos was an entity that developed at these levels, which were interrelated, and their interactions were fundamental to constantly shaping both these levels and the ethos itself. To begin with the classroom level in the context of my research, though teachers were unique persons, they did not work in a school without being influenced by their colleagues and the pupils they had to teach. A teacher told me: 'we would be different teachers in a different school, or in the same school with different pupils.' Even when one

classroom teacher sought to do something in opposition or addition to what was common or established in the school or in the social context of a particular school, that teacher did so with reference to what already existed, and any tensions and negotiations involved influenced all levels. In this respect, I would suggest that the ethos within separate classrooms is influenced by both the whole school and its context. At the same time, the ethos that develops at whole school level relates to how individual teachers work and behave, as well as to the students' background; similarly, the students are influenced by the different teachers whom they have as well as by some features of the whole school. Thus, when one talks about classroom ethos, one should not see it as a separate entity but as closely related to the whole school and its broader social context; similarly, when one talks about the ethos of the whole school, one should see it as being greatly shaped by the ethos that develops at the level of different classrooms, as well as by some characteristics of the school's social context.

The data indicated that the above levels of ethos interrelate differently: they can work together or follow a common route; there can be tensions between them, or even a struggle of one to counteract the other; illustrative examples of these interactions are presented in each case study as well as the cross-case analysis. These interactions between the levels of the classroom, the whole school and the school's social context imply that ethos is not static but in a state of flux. Appreciating the outcomes of these interactions may be possible to only a limited extent, because they develop on a continuous basis, being influenced by the circumstances, choices and actions of all the parties involved. Exploring the interactions between the levels at which ethos develops is the only way to understand the shifting scenery of ethos. In the next two paragraphs, I offer two images, which can help to understand how the three levels interrelate, how ethos develops, and what the implications for moral, social and citizenship education are.

A *system with three wheels*, where the motion of each wheel regulates, to a great extent, the motion of the others, can show the interrelationships developed within, and among, the three levels of ethos. The wheels may move at different speeds, and in opposite directions, though only a common direction makes the system operate; however, the schools that I examined could operate in cases when the classroom teacher tried to work against the influences of the whole school (e.g. high academic emphasis) and of the school's context (e.g. competitive values and attitudes). These different movements not only deregulated the school system, as would occur with a system of three wheels, but also created conditions with positive implications for students' moral, social and citizenship education.

Another helpful pattern for understanding ethos is that of *a musical score*: the notes, related to each other in different ways in each case, give a different piece of music that cannot be

composed in the same way by another artist. The outcome is more than an aggregate of the notes; it constitutes a unique interrelationship that takes into account each of them. This representation is a good image of ethos in that the latter is shaped by every aspect of behaviours, values, activities and words. As every musician or listener to music plays or enjoys a piece of music differently, each person at school feels, and contributes to, its ethos differently, as influenced by his/her own biography and criteria. Another point is that even when the same musician plays the same piece of music, the outcome is not exactly the same, because the musician plays differently each time. Similarly, each person can understand and contribute to the shaping of ethos differently on any situation. What happens with the musical notes, but not with the levels or features of ethos, is that the notes are independent of each other: they have a certain sound on the keyboard, no matter whether they are used for classical or pop music; though they can be synthesized together in numerous different ways, they do not intrude into one another. On the contrary, some levels and features of ethos may be strongly shaped, or contradicted and counteracted, by others. It should be noted, though, that as was seen in the analysis of the case studies, contradictions often entail tensions and gaps, and harmony is an ideal.

While these images try to capture the complex and fluctuating nature of ethos, they also underline it, indicating the need to recognise and explore ethos in its complexity and development at the levels of the classroom, of the whole school and of the school's social context, as these levels interrelate. The complex, shifting scenery of ethos should be considered as such when investigating the development of moral, social and citizenship education at school.

**School social context: differences**

The study detected differences in ethos that related to schools' different contextual features. I explored schools in different contexts[1], because previous research indicated that the school's social context was influential. Comparisons emerged across the cases on the basis of social background, state or private ownership of schools, and urban or rural surroundings, as well as school and classroom size.

It was found that differences in the social class of students contributed to some differences in their values and behaviour, as well as to discipline matters. Of relevance is that the status of the teachers, in students' and parents' eyes, appeared to be enhanced when the social background of students was lower-class. A school's private or state ownership also influenced its ethos; the private school's care for its reputation and its clientele promoted an academic emphasis at the expense of

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[1]Four schools were urban, three of these being state schools representing different socio-economic status; the other was private, while a rural state school was also investigated.

timetabled moral, social and citizenship education, and of non-academic activities. By contrast, the teachers at the state schools were civil servants who were employed and paid by the state, and did not have specific reasons to please parents, with whom they even disagreed openly at times. As regards differences between urban and rural contexts, it was found that the children who had a more carefree, family-like and relaxed lifestyle in the countryside had developed as less competitive and more social persons than their peers who lived in densely populated, alienated urban contexts. Moreover, the fact that the village school and its pupils were considered to represent the future of the village made the community members support the school and view the pupils as active members of the community. Another contextual feature that emerged as important was the size of classes and schools; this was sometimes related to the social context (e.g. small village – small school). Smaller sizes seemed to facilitate the development of closer relationships between teachers and pupils, among pupils themselves, or between the school and the community, while discipline problems were easier to handle, and there was also more scope for the development of collaborative pedagogic methods, as well as of non-academic activities, which both promoted students' active participation. More detailed explanations and exemplifications of the above differentiations have been offered in the relevant section of chapter ten.

Other differences between school contexts were noticed but minimally explored. For example, the private school A, the affluent state school C and the rural school E did not have any ethnic minority pupils, and lacked any problems of racial discrimination; notably, the state schools B and D had both minority pupils and discrimination problems. Such contextual differences, and their impact on ethos, could be investigated by further research.

**Features of ethos**

The study explored some features of ethos that emerged as important within each case and across cases, and investigated how these related to students' moral and social development. The study touched upon such features without exploring them fully, as this would need much more time and more researchers. The broad scope of ethos means that any research on it has to address this breadth, and may also have the disadvantage of not investigating all its features thoroughly. The features of ethos that I distinguished in this study had to do, in the context of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships, with the issues of academic emphasis, competitiveness, pedagogy, student participation, discipline, as well as the parents'-school relationships. The role of religion and politics and values in shaping the ethos was also examined, as being related to the area of moral, social and citizenship education. As was indicated in the separate presentations of the case studies and in the cross-case analysis, these features were related to each other, even through divergence.

The influence of each of these features on ethos and students' moral and social development depended on the circumstances. For example, in the urban school C, which had a strong academic tradition and attracted children of well-educated and middle- or upper-class parents, high academic emphasis was a prevalent feature; this did not occur in the rural school E, where students had other options for the future than going to university. Thus, the school's social context largely determined which features of ethos were more prevalent. Beyond any differences among school contexts, what emerged as fundamental to shaping the ethos in all schools was the relationships developed between teachers and pupils. The quality, and the underlying values, of these relationships underpinned many other features of the ethos; for example, if teachers saw the pupils as persons who should be respected, they would avoid authoritarian disciplinary methods and would not work only on developing pupils' academic performance. The data indicated that, apart from such explicit choices of teachers, it could also be details in their behaviour and overall presence, such as the tone of voice, that coloured the atmosphere and the relationships formed. As Jackson (1968) suggested in 'Life in Classrooms', the things one calls 'little' or 'trivial' may be larger and more important than they appear, being daily sights and unnoticed 'in the daily grind' of school life. I would suggest that deeper qualities lie behind 'little things'; for example, teacher V at school D always used the word 'please' when she ordered children to be quiet or do something, because she generally attempted to be polite and wanted her pupils to behave politely. Children - at all the schools that I examined - could understand and respond to these details, commonly being perceptive, and not lenient, evaluators of their teachers' and school's qualities.

Further research on features of ethos such as the above, and others that this study has not distinguished, can become increasingly valid if it takes the form of longer-term ethnographies with a number of researchers, who examine different features while collaborating with each other.

**The ethos and the curriculum**

The study indicated that the curriculum related to moral, social and citizenship education is closer to ethos than may be implied by its being taught in certain periods, or by phrases such as 'formal and informal' and 'taught and non-taught curriculum', or by any contrasts between their values and messages.

The *influence of the ethos upon the curriculum* was detected at the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context. At classroom level, in the case of teaching RE and SCE, it was shown that teachers who were personally interested in the moral and socio-political issues that were involved, could raise the latter in class and often evoke the interest and/or the critical thinking of their students. At whole school level, any attempts of schools and teachers to be

politically neutral resulted into depoliticising the teaching of SCE and other subjects; moreover, the intense pursuit of high academic standards functioned at the expense of the teaching time and the status of the subjects of SCE and RE (while enhancing the position of subjects such as Mathematics). At the level of the school's social context, the political characteristics of the community could influence the treatment of politics in the curriculum, while the religious attitudes of the community could influence the attitudes of students towards religious teaching; moreover, the extent to which the school's social context related education to future academic and professional success affected the importance that was attributed to timetabled moral, social and citizenship education. More detailed accounts of the above issues are given in the relevant section of chapter ten. The *curriculum could also influence the ethos*. A major way in which this could happen – and which is particularly applicable in the case of highly centralised education systems such as the Greek one - is when there is officially prescribed material to be taught, and/or mandatory textbooks. In the cases which I studied, this resulted in frequently confining the scope of moral, social and citizenship education within some subjects; for example, socio-political issues could be raised mainly in SCE classes and not in other classes, while these issues could be largely those which featured in the respective textbooks. The contents and values of these subjects could, as was shown in some cases with RE, influence children's thinking and behaviour. Another way in which the curriculum influenced ethos had to do with the need for covering the prescribed curriculum; this could pressure teachers, especially in a school with high academic emphasis, and also reduce the time for non-academic and/or group-centred activities that could promote students' social development.

The mutual influence between the ethos and the curriculum shapes each of them and the context where moral, social and citizenship education develops. This implies that good understanding of both the ethos and the curriculum requires considering this developing interrelationship. It also indicates that the question raised at the beginning of the thesis, about whether the curriculum or the ethos may be most important for students' moral and social development, cannot, and does not need to be answered because the curriculum and the ethos are inextricably related to each other. It also implies that those concerned with the ethos and the curriculum should recognise the importance of each of the two as regards moral, social and citizenship education; the impact of each of them in isolation, or contrary to the other, can be much less fruitful than when working together.

After considering the levels at which ethos develops, and some of its features, as well as its interactions with the curriculum, a further issue concerns their impact on students' moral and social

development. It was shown that the ethos is not static, as it develops through the dynamics formed between, and within, the levels of the classroom, the whole school, and the school's social context, while interactions with the curriculum occur too. The shifting scenery of the context of the ethos and the curriculum implies that their impact on students' personal development cannot be fully understood or precisely estimated and predicted. What is more, as Jackson and colleagues (1993) suggested - after many years' research on the moral life of classrooms - the moral influences that students receive from schooling can occur without the students understanding them completely; teachers may not often understand the consequences of their behaviour either. At the same time, as Hansen (1993) suggested, the same incident or message may have moral meaning to one student and not to another; I should add that it may have different moral meanings for different persons, or have variant moral meanings by itself. In the light of these points, what appears to be feasible and realistic as regards research and practice in the area is to study in the actual context of the ethos and the curriculum, with reference to the dynamics involved.

**Ethos, Curriculum and Realities**

This study contributes to exploring the notion of ethos, its differentiation across different social contexts, and its relationship to the taught curriculum, as well as some of its features that concern students' moral and social development. These contributions have been reached through examining the realities of five Greek primary schools, and they offer insights into how moral, social and citizenship education developed at these schools. For example, the unravelling of the notion of ethos into the levels of the classroom, of the whole school, and of the school context, can help the understanding of why a teacher may behave differently in different schools. There is a two-way process: the immersion in, and study of, school realities leads to discussions of the ethos, the curriculum, and the development of moral, social and citizenship education in their context, while these discussions illuminate the school realities themselves.

Studying these realities is important, and it requires exploring directly what really happens in schools. Such an exploration can indicate what factors and circumstances, inside and outside school, may develop in favour of, or against, students' personal development. As was initially mentioned, the study did not include schools that claimed to do anything special in terms of moral, social and citizenship education; the study sought to understand what, in the context of the ethos and the curriculum, related to that development. The potential contribution of research should be considered:

> 'The art of case study research and perhaps of any research is to describe reality in order to create it.' (Walker, 1986: 113)

Especially as regards studies on morals and civics at school, there is a basic reason why daily school realities should be explored in depth: morality and citizenship *are* about real life. Behind daily activities and routines, there are values, assumptions, and relationships that may go unnoticed because they are parts of routines that students and teachers overlook as familiar, or are too busy to investigate. The present study has indicated that ethos is fluctuating and complex; so is its relationship to the curriculum. Studying them in conjunction with the contested notions of morality and citizenship makes research complex; for example, one cannot objectively measure students' moral and social maturity, let alone the impact of the ethos and the curriculum on it. However, seeking to understand values, attitudes and behaviours, is a fundamental reason for research, as a result of which some suggestions can be offered. For example, how teacher D in school B cared for one of his pupils, who underachieved and lacked confidence, may offer some insights about respecting the personality of children and promoting their self-esteem.

Teachers can reflect on the realities of their classroom, school and broader social context, so as to know them better, understand themselves in relation to them, and see to what extent, and in which ways, they can work to contribute to students' personal development. The difficulty is that ethos or culture is so implicit in what teachers do or see that they may not often recognise it. Margaret Mead is credited with saying of culture that it is like fish and water – fish will be the last creatures to discover water; culture resides both within and between people (Finnan & Levin, 2000). If teachers do not seek to understand it, they may overestimate or underestimate the situations where they work, as well as their own potential. Reflecting upon underlying assumptions and values can help teachers understand themselves. Mitchell and Weber (1999: 232) suggested how teachers' self-study could help:

> 'Studying ourselves does not always involve major change; sometimes, it is just about revaluing what was already there and using it in new ways that are informed by both the personal and the social.'

They also suggested that self-study leads to reinvention, which brings changes that occur when teachers become more aware of unnoticed or neglected aspects of their personal and social development and work. When this is undertaken seriously and collectively, it can also lead to institutional changes. Teachers' studying themselves may not be simple or painless; A. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998: 30) talked about 'hard thinking and soul-searching'.

In this respect, learning about the realities of *other* schools can be helpful. When provoked by encounters with ideas and practices from elsewhere, teachers may pay more attention to their own; exposure to other cultures can help understand one's own. I think that teachers and students are likely to remember some experiences of their own while reading research on the ethos and the curriculum of other schools. As D. Hargreaves (1994) noted, with reference to research on the life

of classrooms and schools, the routines of school life persist remarkably across different schools and times, despite any attempts of educational reformers to change things. He suggested that this is due to the nature of schools and classroom organisation, as well as to the professional culture of the teachers; whatever the precise reasons in each educational context are, the point is that others' educational experiences may not be very distant from one's own. Studying different schools can also help teachers open their minds and think less parochially (Sizer, 1992). I should add that learning about others' school experiences is a wish among teachers that came up in my research; many teachers often asked me about the realities of other schools I visited, and also asked for my view about their practices and ideas, frequently saying how important it was to discuss these things. I thought that these teachers felt isolated in their routines and needed to learn more about their own stories and those of others. As Sizer (1984, 1996) and Apple and Beane (1999) suggested with reference to the US context, teachers typically lack time, within the intense dailiness of schools, to discuss and write about their realities and to read about those of other teachers and schools. The feelings of frustration and cynicism that many educators and community members experience about education are often the result of not hearing about the hard-won insights and successes of other schools. There are real examples of schools and teachers that try to develop a positive ethos (Munn, 1999), suggesting possibilities for others to consider.

The contribution of studies on the concept of ethos, and its interrelationship with the curriculum as regards moral, social and citizenship education, is that it can promote the understanding and the improvement of what is offered to students in this area. A critical question is how far this improvement can go.

**Realities and Realism**

When investigating moral, social and citizenship education in this study, no schools or teachers were found to be absolutely ethical and democratic or to set examples that should be faithfully followed. In each case, it was only some values, some messages, some choices, and some aspects of behaviours that appeared to contribute to students' development as persons. As Crick (1977c) suggested, a school as a school cannot be completely democratic; this can be understood, for example, with reference to the authority involved in the adult-child, or teacher-student, relationship. What is feasible, as Crick put it (ibid: 18), is that a school becomes "more democratic or, for the worse, less democratic". The data demonstrated that there are teachers who, with more or less support or hindrance by the whole school and its social context, may contribute to their students' moral and social development. Thus it is reasonable to expect only that efforts be made so that schools develop as more ethical and democratic, or as less authoritarian and impersonal places.

As Noddings (1994) said about adults involved in moral education, they should try to be reasonably good; for example, they should try to consider the effects of their acts on others. In this study, positive messages and contributions - in terms of moral, social and citizenship education - were found to be offered not by special programmes and statements, but mostly through qualities penetrating, within daily realities, the interpersonal relationships and transactions which developed in the school context. I was interested to note that many of the teachers who made education more ethically and socially informed did not say or think that they did so; for example, they did not see their work as creating a 'democratic classroom'; they seemed to be mostly guided by their values and sensitivities, and were commonly influenced by their context. The words and acts of teachers can impact on the lives of their students in ways that none of them can realise. This is reminiscent of the sayings about daily, obscure heroes, who may not do anything that looks great in society, but struggle to endure daily life with dignity and hard work. This fits well with what G. Eliot wrote in the last paragraph of 'Middlemarch':

> '...the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life...'

A question is how far such contributions can go.

The answer largely relates to the context in which this question is asked. The notion of ethos comes in again, particularly at the level of the school's social context. To take the issue of competitiveness at school, it should be considered that not many children are in the position of the village children of school E who could continue the flourishing rural business of their parents, and had no reasons to see school in instrumental and competitive ways; moreover, many teachers do not teach such children. In current urban contexts, the majority of students, parents and teachers cannot ignore the exchange market value that is attached to education, which, in many places around the world, is increasingly related to personal and societal economic empowerment. We now discuss efficiency, not quality; we now discuss academic success, not education (Cowen, 1994). At the same time, this does not mean that education should be morally or socially unaware. It can be suggested that a perspective somewhere between the extremes is realistic and viable. This should not be seen as reconciliation but as a continuous struggle for a balance. A grade 6 boy at school B captured this balance, though unwittingly:

> 'The school offers me education so that I will become a *good citizen* and a *nice person* and I can *get a job* when I grow up' (emphasis added).

Though this balance may not be easy to achieve, it can be seen as one more difficulty that teachers can shoulder.

**An Epilogue**

This study has considered the development of moral, social and citizenship education in five Greek primary schools by examining both their ethos and curriculum, so as to embrace the widest scope in which moral, social and citizenship education develops at school. Though several constraints have limited the study, and there are also limits to the generalisability of the findings of the five case studies, the evidence offers insights about how students' moral, social and citizenship education, as provided through the taught curriculum and the school's ethos, can be promoted or hindered. By analysing the five cases, the study has contributed to illuminating the notion of ethos, indicating its development across and within the levels of the classroom, of the whole school, and of the school's social context, and the interactions of these levels. The study has also shown that the ethos and the taught curriculum can so seriously influence each other, that their consideration in parallel is often needed. The ethos can support or counteract the curriculum, and accordingly shape its impact; the curriculum as well, through the teaching and learning requirements which it implies, as well as the messages which it embraces, can exert serious influence on the ethos.

The fluctuating and complex nature of ethos and its inextricable relationship with the taught curriculum suggest that teachers should continuously try to understand its levels and features, so that they can position themselves critically towards the realities of their classroom and school; this can help them shape their expectations, practices and efforts realistically. The characteristics of the whole school and its social context can both support and hinder their efforts at classroom and whole school levels. Particularly as regards the area of moral, social and citizenship education, ethos and school realities are fundamental, for the additional reason that morality and citizenship are the provinces of reality. This study has not traced or suggested any romantic images or exemplary cases of schools, teachers, pupils and parents; it has noted only efforts that could benefit students' moral, social and citizenship education. Their results cannot be estimated with any certainty, while all effects are different for different students, who are unique in their biographies, needs and expectations; there are also unrecognised and unintended effects. There is no need to understand fully and estimate precisely; there is only a need to try to study what is already there and to improve it within its unavoidable limits.

It was indicated that even in cases when teachers would feel weak in front of negative influences from the whole school and the social context, there was still some space for personal efforts, even if teachers thought that they did not do much, or as much as they wished. It also appeared that 'little' things that the teachers could do, or not do, contributed greatly to the ethos. Although the exact outcomes of all these are not predictable, an implied future could be suggested. Children appeared to perceive, and respond, in a sensitive and sharp-eyed way to implicit and

explicit messages around them; their perceptive looking into their school realities could influence the shaping of their values and attitudes. In these respects, whether teachers liked it or not, their position at school was not value-free. Even when moral, social and citizenship education was not pursued or mentioned at school, there were moral and social implications in what teachers, schools and communities did or failed to do. In this sense, it is not for educators to decide whether such education happens or not. What they can decide is to attempt to study what occurs and to work on its quality, regardless of whether these efforts are conceived and known as 'moral' or 'personal' or 'citizenship' education. Educators can look inwards and outwards to school realities, so as to understand them and use the possibilities they have for creating more democratic, or less authoritarian, classrooms and schools. In this way, they can become owners of their lives, and also help their students develop as persons who try to understand and own their realities and lives.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX 1.

Curriculum for the subject of Religious Education ("Christian Orthodox Education") at grade 6 (Presidential Decree 403/1993)

| GENERAL UNITS | | MORE SPECIFIC UNITS (THEMES) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CONTENT | AIMS | CONTENT | OBJECTIVES |
| A: SEEKING FOR THE TRUTH<br>All the people were always seeking after the truth. Answers to people's questions were offered by various sources (Religion, philosophy, poetry, science). | Children should learn that all people long for the truth. They should realise that people struggle to approach truth through asking questions, studying, observing and inquiring. | 1. PEOPLE ALWAYS LOOKED FOR THE TRUTH<br>Before Christ, people worshipped the idols (stars, animals, etc.), honoured a lot of gods and searched the truth through philosophy.<br>In modern times, people honour God, obey social norms, work in scientific labs, etc. People always struggle to overcome pain, to receive an education, to live better, to approach the truth. | Children should learn that in the past people have been seeking after the truth through various religions and philosophical discussions. They should learn about the deep desire of modern man to approach the truth. |
| | | 2. WHAT SHINES IS NOT GOLD<br>The Golden Calf<br>People often distort truth, deceive the others by presenting the black for white and the iron for gold.<br>One should be careful, not to be tempted by the shiny appearance of things. | They should learn that there are cases of distortion of the truth. They should understand that truth and lie live together in life and that attention should be paid to finding the truth. |
| B: JESUS IS THE TRUTH<br>People who lived in Jesus' time and met him confirm that Jesus was the Truth. | They should learn about the persons who lived with Christ and professed that he is the Truth. | 1.ANDREW, PETER AND JOHN<br>The three fishermen had heard from their teacher and prophet John the Baptist about Christ, and that he was the Truth.<br>When they met Jesus, they realised by themselves that he was indeed the Truth.<br>When Christ invited them to become his | They should appreciate the willingness of the three simple fishermen to become disciples of Christ.<br>They should be sensitised to approach Christ who is the Truth. |

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| | | disciples they willingly accepted. (John, 1, 35-43)<br><br>2. PHILIP AND NATHANAEL<br>Christ invites Philip to become his pupil and he accepts the Invitation.<br>Philip, expressing his care for his friend Nathanael, invites him to meet Christ, the Truth. The true friends meat each other in their mutual interest in the search for and the knowledge of the Truth.<br>John, 1, 44-46.<br><br>3. COME AND SEE<br>Nathanael does not agree with Philip's enthusiasm. He relies on logic and given facts that nothing good can come from Nazareth.<br>Philip, facing the reservations of his friend, suggests to him something effective: to try by himself. That is why he told him: "Come and see".<br>John, 1, 47-52.<br><br>4. GREEKS WHO MET CHRIST<br>The Greeks were seeking the truth since the old times.<br>A group of Greeks visit Jerusalem, meet Christ and recognise the truth in his face.<br>The prophetic words of Christ for the Greeks and their realisation.<br>John, 12, 20-23<br><br>5.'I AM THE TRUTH'<br>Many talked about the truth. But Christ identified the truth with himself and said: "I am the truth" and he showed this with his words, actions and all | They should appreciate the fact that Philip rushed to bring his friend close to Christ, the Truth.<br>They should feel the need to share the joy of Truth with their friends.<br><br>They should appreciate the fact that Christ, the Truth, set out from a little and non-important place.<br>They should understand that Truth is not a matter of theory but personal acquaintance and relationship to Christ.<br><br>They should feel joy for the fact that our ancestors, the Greeks, cared for and met with Christ.<br>Children should become aware of the need to continue the tradition of orthodoxy, which is our life with Christ.<br><br>They should appreciate the importance of the fact that Christ, who was God, became man and showed to us the truth about our life. |

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| | | his life.<br>John, 14, 6<br>Words of eternal life... | |
| C: THE BOOK OF TRUTH<br>The Holy Bible is the book of Truth that God revealed. | They should learn about the importance of the Holy Bible for our faith.<br>They should become familiar with the Book of Truth.<br>They should understand that the Orthodox Church uses the Holy Bible while worshipping God. | 1.THE HOLY BIBLE<br>The Holy Bible is the book that contains the truth about God, the man and the world.<br>By studying the Holy Bible, the Christians come to know the words of Christ and are led to the new way of life.<br><br>2.ISAIAH "PROPHET OF GOSPEL"<br>Prophet Isaiah was invited by Christ to become a prophet.<br>He preached about the faith in God, justice and the necessity for changing the way of life.<br>He said in advance, becoming thus a prophet of the Gospel, about the coming of Messiah Christ in the world.<br><br>3. PSALMS<br>Truth about Christ and the world became a song by man.<br>The Psalms is a book that contains poems which express praisegiving, gratitude, admiration and feelings of repentance and confession.<br>Church uses the book of psalms in all services.<br>Selection of lines that correspond to the above kinds of psalms.<br><br>4. LET US WORSHIP (Little Entrance)<br>Let us welcome Christ and his words. With these words and the process of the Little | They should come to know the Holy Bible as a book.<br>They should understand that man, through the Holy Bible, comes to know Christ and gives meaning to his life.<br><br>They should learn about a great person of the Old Testament.<br>They should become informed of Isaiah' preaching.<br>They should learn about the accuracy in which prophet Isaiah talked about Messiah's coming.<br><br>-They should learn about the Psalter which is one of the basic books of Church.<br>-They should know representative lines of different kinds of psalms.<br><br>-They should learn about the basic elements of the Little Entrance. |

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| | | Entrance during the Holy Liturgy the coming of Christ in the world is presented.<br>The priest keeps raised the Gospel, which stands for Christ that enters the public life.<br>The lit candle that goes ahead symbolises John the Forerunner.<br>The Christians are prepared listening to the Gospel. | |
| | | 5. 'WISDOM; LET US ATTEND'<br>The New Testament, contains, apart from the life and acts of Christ (Gospels), the acts and the epistles of the apostles.<br>In these, the activity and the preaching of the holy apostles is included. By saying, "wisdom, let us attend", the priest invites the people to listen to the Apostle.<br>Selection of passages from the apostolic readings. | They should learn what the apostolic reading is.<br>They should realise the importance of the apostolic reading for the life of the Christians.<br>They should come to know representative extracts from the apostolic readings. |
| | | 6. 'WISDOM; STAND UP' (The Gospel)<br>After the suggestion of the priest 'Peace be to all', the reading of the holy Gospel begins.<br>By reading the Gospel, the words of Christ are again heard in the world.<br>Selection of passages from Gospel. | They should appreciate the importance of Gospel reading at the Holy Liturgy.<br>They should realise the redempting meaning of the Gospel. |
| D. CHRIST TEACHES<br>Christ taught the Truth in an understandable and illustrative way.<br>He used pictures and parables.<br>By these means, Christ reveals to simple listeners meaningful messages and describes the new world that the | They should understand that the messages of Christ's parables require attention, humility and faith.<br>They should understand that the messages for the kingdom of God form a | 1.THE HIDDEN TREASURE – THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE<br>Presentation of the two parables with the certain incidents that gave the impetus for them. (Why they were hiding the treasures and what was happening | They should understand that the Kingdom of God is like a hidden treasure which man cannot find if he does not look for it.<br>They should realise that Christ ceaselessly and in many ways appears to people when they look for him. |

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| Kingdom of God creates on the earth. | new reality. | when they were finding them. The longing of the traders for the pearls until they could find the valuable one.)<br>The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hid in a field and like the precious pearl that the merchantman found.<br>The sudden discovery of the treasure.<br>Sudden meeting with Christ. The persistent effort to find the precious pearl.<br>People look everywhere for happiness and truth.<br>But they will feel the greatest joy and happiness when they meet Christ, his Kingdom.<br>(Matt., 13, 44-46)<br><br>2. TWO PEOPLE PRAY<br>(Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican)<br>The scene of the parable is in the temple of Jerusalem, where two people pray.<br>The provocative stance of the Pharisee. He exalted himself before God. He trusts only himself.<br>The humble stance of the Publican, who feels his sinfulness and asks for the mercy of God.<br>The Publican is justified. "We should be not like Pharisee but like the humble...'.<br>Luke, 18, 9-14.<br><br>3. HOW MANY TIMES WILL WE FORGIVE?<br>(The parable of the unfaithful servant)<br>Simple, brief and illustrative presentation of the parable of the unfaithful servant.<br>Emphasis on the | They should realise that God did not justify the Pharisee, who was boastful for his deeds, but the Publican who asked for mercy, because the attitude of the Pharisee to God was hypocritical and false, while the Publican was frank and true.<br><br>They should understand that God forgives people for much greater sins than they are called to forgive the others.<br>They should learn to be real in their relationships to others. |

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| | | compassion of the King God to his servant (the man), and the cruelty of his servant towards his fellowman. Also emphasis on how closely related are the forgiveness of God-Father towards our sins and the forgiveness we show to our fellowmen.<br><br>4. THE TONGUE NEEDS TO BE REFRAINED<br>Presentation of the biblical passage. The positive and negative results of using the tongue (supplementary passage).<br>James, 3, 1, 1-12.<br><br>5. THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES<br>The Vine with the branches.<br>The root of the vine feeds the branches with its juices. The leaves that remain united with the root bear a lot of fruits.<br>The branches that are not linked with the vine become dry and rotten and are thrown into the fire. Transition into the Christian life. "I am the Vine, you are the ..." (Sermon on the mount) | They should be sensitised to using their tongue appropriately and responsibly. "If someone does not sin while speaking, he is a perfect man".<br><br>-They should realise that the link of Christians with Christ should be unbreakable, as that of the vinegar to the vines. Christ feeds those who believe with his teaching, with his love, with his body and blood.<br>-They should realise that when the Christians are united with Christ they bear fruits. |
| E. THE SERMON OF CHRIST ON THE MOUNT<br>Christ on the mount addresses the people and teaches them in a simple way his salving messages. | -They should understand the way of life that Christ brings to people.<br>-They should realise that this new way of life is offered by God and is conquered with personal effort. | 1.CHRIST TEACHES PEOPLE<br>Passage-translation Math., ch. 5.<br>Reference to the lines 5, 3, 5, 5, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5, 9.<br><br>1a. CHRIST TEACHES THE | -They should appreciate the worth of Christ's words that are mentioned in the passage.<br>-They should realise the significance for the Christ's words for the life of people.<br>-They should appreciate the worth of Christ's sermon on the mount and its importance for people's life.<br><br>The same as at 1. |

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| | | PEOPLE<br>Passage-translation<br>Math., ch. 5.<br>Reference to the lines<br>5, 4, 5, 6, 5, 10, 5, 11. | The same as at 1. |
| | | 2. FORGET ABOUT THE PREVIOUS EVENTS<br>Passage-translation<br>Math., 5, 43-48.<br>Emphasis on the command for love. | -They should understand the vital importance of the command for love. |
| | | 3. YES AND NO IN OUR WORDS<br>Passage-translation<br>Math., 5, 34 and 37. | -They should learn that Christ with this teaching sets all people free from lie and oaths.<br>-They should realise that by living and speaking the truth they become true and responsible people. |
| | | 4. THE SALT AND THE LIGHT<br>Passage-translation<br>Math., 5, 13-16. | -They should realise that the presence of Christians in life cannot be but important and dynamic like the salt and the light in the earth. |
| | | 5. ON THE ROCK OF FAITH<br>Passage-translation<br>Math., 7, 24-27. | They should realise that Christ's words are the most solid foundation for life. |
| F. CHURCH IS THE ARK OF THE TRUTH<br>Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed to people the truth.<br>The Church, like an Ark, keeps and offers the Truth.<br>The symbol of faith.<br>The great victory of Orthodoxy. | -They should learn that Truth was revealed to people by Christ.<br>-They should learn about the struggle of Church for the protection and the keeping of Christ's Truth.<br>-They should approach the content and the meaning of the symbol of faith.<br>-They should realise that through the Church life we learn and live the truth. | 1. ARK TRUTH SALVATION<br>The meaning of the Ark of Testament.<br>The Church, as Ark, keeps the Holy Tradition and sustains, through this, the life of the Christians and leads them to salvation.<br>Source: | -They should learn about the Ark of Testament.<br>-They should understand that Church is the Ark where the integrity of the Word of Christ is kept.<br>-They should realise that Church guides and saves the Christians. |
| | | 2.TOGETHER IN THE STREET OF TRUTH<br>The Truth that was revealed by Christ to people through his life and teaching has been endangered by false interpretations. | -They should learn about the causes that led Church to the Ecumenical Councils.<br>-They should realise that the Christian faith, despite the persecutions and any |

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| | | The Fathers of the Church have saved the Truth and have expressed the Orthodox Faith in seven (7) Ecumenical Councils. | problems, with the grace of the Holy Spirit and the effort of the fathers and the believers of the Church, remained pure.<br>-They should feel responsible for the keeping of the orthodox faith. |
| | | 3.THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (The Creed)<br>Passage and translation of the Symbol of Faith.<br>Historical data for its formation.<br>Division of it in articles.<br>4-5.<br>Simple analysis of the articles of the Symbol of Faith. | -They should come in touch with the text of our Symbol of Faith.<br>-They should learn about the history of its creation and its division in articles.<br>-They should acquaint with the content of the Symbol of Faith. |
| | | 4. HERESIES<br>Reference to the words of Christ for the coming of false prophets.<br>How we distinguish the heretics. The way they work (propaganda). | -They should become informed of the heretics going around attempting to communicate their ideas and to acquire fans.<br>-They should understand that the Truth is lived at Church and lies in the Orthodox tradition and the Holy Testament. |
| | | 5.A FEASTDAY FOR THE VICTORY OF TRUTH (SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY)<br>The holy icons and the problems with them.<br>Seventh Ecumenical Council (Veneration).<br>Sunday of Orthodoxy.<br>"Which God Great..." | -They should learn about the reasons that caused the debate about the icons and the solution that the Church gave.<br>-They should realise the importance of the holy icons.<br>-They should feel joy for the victory of Church. |

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| G. LIVING ALL TOGETHER THE TRUTH<br>The Holy Sacraments and the Services of Church are the means through which the Christians possess the grace and live the Truth. | -They should realise that with the holy Sacraments and the Services of Church, the Christians live the Truth. | 1. 'WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME, I AM WITH THEM"<br>Christ promised to those who believe in him that he will be with them, when two or three or more are gathered in his name.<br>The Christians from the early years are gathered at a place (temple) where they pray to and listen to Christ's words.<br>At these gatherings Christ is present and reveals to the Christians the Truth.<br>Matt., 18, 20. | -They should understand that the Christian can find and live with Christ with the other members of Church.<br>-They should realise that the participation in the gatherings of Church. |
| | | 2.FROM THE DARK TO THE LIGHT<br>The world that God created was first wrapped with dark.<br>With a command of his: "let there be light", he created the light.<br>With this first creature, his nice world was revealed.<br>With the sunset, the Church, at the Vespers' service, remembers this creation and expresses thankfulness and praisegiving to the God Creator.<br>At the Vespers a hymn "Light of Joy", which the first Christians chanted at the sunset when they lit the candles, is heard.<br>Hymn: "Light of Joy"<br>Content of the hymn. | -They should learn that the light was the first creature of God.<br>-They should appreciate the importance of the creation of the light.<br>-They should understand the parallel that the Hymn makes between the sunlight and the light of Christ.<br>-They should be sensitised to participate in the service of the Vespers. |
| | | 3.THE JOY OF THE NEW DAY<br>With the sunrise, a new day begins. Each day is a gift and blessing from God to the people and all the creatures.<br>The life goes on:<br>The people work, the plants grow, the | -They should realise the love and providence of God for people and all the creatures, as this welfare is expressed every morning with the sunset of the new day.<br>-They should feel joy for the fact that God, every |

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| | | animals help and accompany people, etc.<br>Every morning at Church the service of the Matins, where the Christians glorify God for the gift of the new day, takes place. That is why the relevant hymn is called "Doxology" (meaning praisegiving)<br>Psalm 148<br>Rhyme of doxology "Glory to thee that showed the light..." | day, rises the sun and spreads the light.<br>-They should appreciate the significance of the morning glorification and generally the matins. |
| | | 4. EVERYTHING IS PRAYING<br>At the Holy Liturgy all the creatures of God participate: the people, the angels and the natural world.<br>The people at every place of the earth and the angels, being logical creatures, pray to God. The natural world participates because at the Holy Liturgy many material elements are used, such as the water, the wine, etc.<br>In this way, the Holy Liturgy acquires universal dimensions and the entire universe resembles a huge temple, where people with all the creatures praise and glorify God.<br>Translation and analysis of the Trisagion hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth..."<br>Poem: everything is praying. | -They should understand that at the Divine Liturgy all the parts of the natural world take on meaning and are valued and blessed.<br>-They should realise the possibility that the Christians have to participate in the glorification of the God all over the universe.<br>-They should appreciate the content of the Divine Liturgy.<br>-They should be sensitised to participate in the Holy Liturgy. |
| | | 5. I REGRET AND I CONCILIATE<br>Human life is nice only through the harmonious relationships with God and the people around us. Sin is the disorder of these relationships. That is why change in | -They should realise that the real life results from harmonious relationships with God and people.<br>-They should realise that the children are themselves personally responsible for the the |

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| | | the way of thinking and behaving is often required (repentance). The Church, in order to help man, has the Holy Confession. Source: Matt. 5, 24, Efes. 4, 26.<br><br>6.FOR THE HEALTH OF BODY AND SOUL<br>The body and the soul of man are valuable and unique for Church. When a Christian gets sick, except for the medical help, also resorts to Church, which realises the Sacrament of Anointing the Sick. With this, Church begs Christ, the healer of souls and bodies, to cure the sick person by giving to it psychological and corporal health. The Sacrament of Anointing the Sick takes place at the houses of Christians and once a year (Holy Wednesday) at church for all the Christians for "cure of soul and body". | disorder in these relationships.<br>-They should be encouraged to repent and conciliate with God and the people.<br><br>-They should realise that Church pays great attention to the psychological and physical health of the person by performing the Sacrament of Anointing the Sick,<br>-They should appreciate the merit of the health of soul and body as well as the care of Church for this. |
| H. COME AND TAKE LIGHT<br>The joy and light in the night of the Resurrection saturates the whole life of the Orthodox.<br>The Orthodox keep the light of Christ alive and transmit it to all the world. | -They should learn about the effort of the Orthodox Church to communicate the Truth of Gospel all over the earth.<br>-They should become informed of the Orhtodox's care to keep the Light of Truth alive.<br>-They should come to know persons of Church that struggled to communicate the light of Truth. | 1.THE LIGHT OF RESURRECTION<br>The light sends the darkness away.<br>The light expresses joy, feastday, victory, etc.<br>Description of the creation and communication of the light at the night of Resurrection.<br>The Christians receive and offer the light of Resurrection.<br>The Christians live the light of Resurrection every Sunday.<br>Source: The Canon of Resurrection. | -They should learn about the ceremony of production of Light at the night of celebrating the Resurrection.<br>-They should understand the symbolism of this ceremony.<br>-They should realise that Christians in Church accept and live the joy of the Resurrection. |

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| | | 2.ORTHODOXY: BRIGHT LIGHT<br>Since very early, the Orthodox Church communicates the light of the joy of Resurrection all over the world.<br>The command of Jesus Christ to his disciples to communicate the Gospel, whose meaning is joyful message.<br>Source: Matt. 28, 19-20; Mark, 16, 15. | -They should learn about the missionary effort of the Orthodox Church.<br>-They should realise that the communication of the Light of Orthodoxy is a mission of each Christian. |
| | | 3. ORTHODOX GREEKS ALL OVER THE WORLD.<br>All over the world there exist communities of Orthodox Greeks. With centre the temple, the worship and other activities, the Orthodox Greeks overseas cultivate their ecclesiastical, national and cultural identity. | -They should be informed of the existence of Greek Orthodox Communities all over the world.<br>-They should realise the importance of the community for the living of the Greek Orthodox tradition. |
| | | 4. ACQUAINTANCE WITH OTHER ORTHODOXES<br>Elements from Orthodox Churches all over the world (Patriarchies, Independent Churches, etc.)<br>Source: Diary of Church of Greece.<br>Magazines: All nations, The Light of Nations. | They should learn about the Orthodoxy all over the world.<br>They should realise the universality of Orthodoxy. |
| | | 5. THE LEADING LIGHT OF THE RUSSIANS (Maxim the Greek)<br>Saint Maxim, origin, studies, life in abbey. The impetus for his mission to Russia. His activity and the difficulties he encountered. His struggle for the communication and defence of Orthodoxy. | They should learn about the life of Saint Maxim.<br>They should appreciate his missionary work as well as the difficulties he encountered. |

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| | | Source: Maxim the Greek.<br><br>6.COSMAS AITOLOS<br>Saint Cosmas in the dark years of Turkish rule goes round Greece to talk about the Orthodox faith and to save life.<br>Source: F. Mihalopoulos, "Cosmas Aitolos", pp. 119, 111 and 115.<br><br>7. PAPOULAKOS, THE GOOD SOWER<br>Elements from the life and the deeds of Papoulakos.<br>The preaching of Papoulakos at Kapikia of Gortynia.<br>Source: Bastias, K. "Papoulakos", pp. 121-126. | They should learn about the work of Saint Cosmas Aitolos.<br>They should appreciate his work for the church and the nation.<br><br>They should learn about the life and the work of Papoulakos.<br>They should appreciate his work for the church and the nation. |
| I. UP TO DATE<br>The church services and feastdays are stops of provision (anefodiasmos) and indicators in the life of man. | -They should come to know types of services and feastdays of the Church.<br>-They should understand the meaning that the latter give to the life of our country. | 1.GREGORY THE NAZIANZINES (feastday of the Three Holy Bishops)<br>The life, the deeds and the offer of Gregory the Nazianzines.<br>Source:<br><br>2.LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS<br>Main elements of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. (Time, place and aim)<br><br>3. THE AKATHIST HYMN<br>Brief historical reference to the facts that are linked to the Akathist Hymn.<br>Analysis of lines from the Hymn.<br>Hymn: ...<br><br>4. AUGUST: THE MONTH OF MARY | They should learn about the life and the work of Saint Gregory the Nazianzines.<br>They should realise the importance of his offer.<br><br>-They should learn how the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts takes place.<br>They should be sensitised to participate in the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.<br><br>-They should learn the basics of the content of the Akathist Hymn.<br>They should be sensitised to participate in the service.<br>They should be practised into the singing of some relevant hymns.<br><br>They should learn about |

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| | | The dormition of Holy Mother.<br>The preparation for the feastday of Mother Mary (fasting, prayers), festive feastdays in honour of Mother Mary (*proskinimata*). | the fact of the Dormition of the Mother of God.<br>They should realise that the person of Mother Mary inspires and touches the life of our country.<br>They should consider important the preparation of the believers the preparation of the believers for the feastday of Mother Mary. |
| | | 5. MOTHER MARY'S FIELD (ATHOS)<br>Elements from the foundation of the monastic community of the mount of Athos.<br>a) Place of struggle and prayer<br>b) Keeper of the church tradition<br>c) Leading Light of Orthodoxy | -They should learn about the place of Mount Athos, the history of it and the people who live there.<br>-They should realise its great contribution to the life of the nation and the of the Orthodox Church. |
| | | 6. CHRIST IS THE STREET, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE<br>This teaching unit concludes all the lessons of Orthodox Religious Education at primary school.<br>In the perennial search and nostalgia of man for living again close to God, Jesus Christ comes and reveals to man that he is the sole road for salvation, the authentic life and the Truth.<br>Living the life of the Church, man lives Christ as a way of life, content and truth. | -They should know that with this lesson an end is put at the series of the four years' teaching of the Orthodox Christian Education, whose basic aim was that pupils would approach the face of Christ.<br>-They should realise that in the life of Church they can learn the way that guides to the real life. |

# APPENDIX 2.

Curriculum for the subject of Social and Citizenship Education at grade 6 (Presidential Decree 168/1984)

A. AIM

The aim of the subject of Social and Citizenship Education is to help pupils:
to know the organisation and the functioning of Greek society and the values on which it is based;
to understand the significance that social and political institutions have for the individual and the society;
to develop their critical thinking with regard to current social problems;
to cultivate their social awareness in order for them to participate responsibly and creatively in the life of a democratic society;
to acquire the necessary sensitivity towards the universal community.

| UNITS | OBJECTIVES | THEMES |
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| 1. ORGANISATION OF SOCIAL LIFE | Expansion and systematisation of the learning included in the respective units of the fifth grade, emphasizing that the pupils become aware of:<br>- the role of the public will in the formation of political life;<br>- the obligation of the citizens to participate actively in social and political procedures;<br>-the contribution of religion to the formation of the Greeks' social life. | α. <u>Social life</u><br>Introductory summary of the content of units 1 and 2 of the fifth grade, with focus on:<br>- Common and family life (biological and evolutionary aspect)<br>- Creation of settlements and formation of communities (evolutionary aspect)<br>- The current communities: formation, offer of services and citizens' participation. Self-government.<br>- The Church community.<br>β. Concise revision of the content of unit 5 of the fifth grade and expansion with focus on:<br>- the state as an instrument of protection of the community (tribe, town, nation). First cells as well as first procedures and institutions (rise of chiefs, citizens' position, the role of priests and religion; classes, kings, tyrants, etc.<br>- the state as a carrier of the public will. Current structures and procedures. The constitution and the people.<br>- instruments of state authority and their role. The government, the people's representatives, justice. Instruments of orderliness. The army: national independence and public domination.<br>- State and religion: religious freedom. The Greek Orthodox church. Relationships between Church and State. |
| 2. STATE AND DEMOCRACY | - Children become aware of the achievements of the nations in the domain of human rights and they | α. <u>Forms of political organisation</u><br>- State and form of government. State and people. The Greek nation. |

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| | examine the procedures of democratic institutions' rise and sustenance.<br>- They appreciate the struggles for these achievements and they become sensitive towards any deviation from them.<br>-They analyse the various forms of government, and compare them on the basis of the principles of democracy.<br>- They strengthen their will and they contribute as citizens of tomorrow to the preservation and promotion of personal and social freedoms as well as institutions that are intended for the securing of social justice and humanism. | - Forms of government: monarchies and oligarchies, totalitarianism and democracy – Historical view and structural elements.<br>-The democratic form of government: meaning and types, contemporary achievements, deviations and consequences (i.e. dictatorship and overthrow of humanism).<br>β.<u>Democratic constitutions</u><br>- What is a constitution – how it is created.<br>- The constitution and the consolidation of citizens' rights (right to life, freedom, education, religious faith, etc.).<br>Citizens' duties.<br>-Critical examination of relevant extracts from various Constitutions. |
| 3. GREEK DEMOCRACY | - Children learn about and understand the basic principles and values of democracy on which the Greek state has relied up to now. They examine the procedures through which, at the level of authority, these principles and values are realised in modern Greece.<br>- They learn about the structure, organisation and way of functioning of the state in the context of declared and constitutionally consolidated principles, the rights of the citizens and obligations of the state.<br>They become aware of the citizen's role in the realisation [of these principles] in the context of individual and group activity. | α. <u>The evolution of democracy in Greece</u>.<br>- Ancient times. Christian years.<br>- Greece under Turkish rule.<br>- The aims of the Greek Revolution. Failures and achievements. Kings and dictators. Abolition of monarchy.<br>- Landmarks in the consolidation of democracy.<br>β. <u>Principles of democracy and democratic institutions</u><br>- Critical examination of extracts of the established Constitution in relation to: public domination, parity and equality before the law, freedom of religion, operation of political parties, division of power, freedom of thinking and partnership.<br>- The government and parliament. The president in a democracy. Elections.<br>- Protection of democracy, the people's vote, the army, the bodies of security, justice, public participation and activity. |
| 4.CARE BY THE STATE | -Children learn about the basic sectors of the state's activity for the satisfaction of individual and social needs and for the improvement of the conditions of life of the society.<br>- They appreciate the value of state measures in the light of the principles of freedom, social justice and equality of the citizens.<br>-They appreciate the role of various social groups, and become aware of the interdependence between society and the individual. | α. <u>Life, health, entertainment</u><br>- Measures and institutions for the protection of the life of the citizens (needs of infants, children, old people, etc.)<br>- Care for the individual's health (medical/ pharmaceutical and hospital care, healthy environment, etc.)<br>- Physical education, sports, entertainment and youth.<br>β. <u>Education – work - progress</u><br>- The contemporary education system.<br>- Principles of democratic education: free education and equality of opportunities, professional equality and progress (relevant extracts from the Constitution and the laws and annotations).<br>Everyone has his own inclinations. |

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|---|---|---|
| | | Further education.<br>- Church education.<br>γ. <u>Social Welfare</u><br>- Nursery schools and other institutions.<br>- Special care for special cases.<br>- Social insurance for all. Claims and requests of the working people. Trade-unionism.<br>- Arts – literacy – sciences. Cultural events.<br>δ. <u>Economy</u><br>- The State's income. The tax-payer.<br>- The State's expenses. Works, salaries, pensions, etc.<br>- Elements of progress in agriculture, livestock, industry.<br>ε. <u>Protection of the environment</u><br>- Sources of goods for all (generally).<br>- Flora and fauna and their protection.<br>- Our sea coasts and their protection<br>- Pollution: from noises, fumes, waste, insecticides, etc. Dangers and steps. |
| 5. US AND THE WORLD | - Children recognise the common rights of the nations and they become aware of their common destiny.<br>-They evaluate the relationships between countries and international practices for the imposition of the will of the powerful, as well as the use of violence (war) in disagreements between countries.<br>- They become aware of the value of the nations' peaceful coexistence and of the need for sincere co-operation, mutual understanding and help on the basis of the principle that the earth's goods belong to everyone.<br>-They learn about and evaluate organised efforts for the facing of relevant problems, as these [efforts] are realised by international organisations and other groups for common activity. | α. <u>The earth's nations</u><br>- Population growth. Nations. Demographic examination of the earth. Relevant problems.<br>- National differences: <u>The myth of the tribe</u>. Religious differences, economic differences and needs; little and big – rich and poor countries; rights in the division of the earth's goods; war as a means of dominance and oppression.<br>β. <u>International competition</u><br>- Need for peaceful coexistence. Dangers of destruction due to armaments and the competition of powerful countries.<br>- Defensive alliances. Critical view.<br>- International organisations; efforts for the consolidation of peace and the fraternization of people, from ancient times to today. Critical view of UNO, the EC, etc.<br>-The rights of man: basic elements from the Universal Proclamation of the Rights of the Man in 1948.<br>-The rights of the child (study of them and the relevant proclamation). |

WEEKLY TIMETABLE OF THE SUBJECT
"SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION"

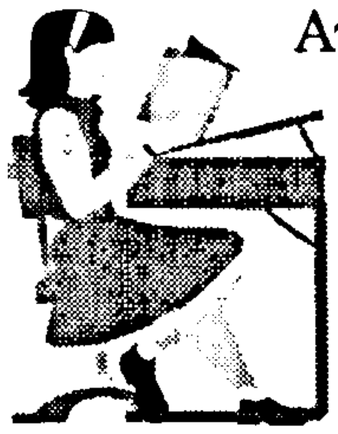
| | Hours of teaching | |
|---|---|---|
| Six-graded primary school | 5th<br>1 | 6th<br>1 |
| Five-graded primary school | 5th<br>1 | 6th<br>1 |
| Four-graded primary school | 5th<br>1 | 6th<br>1 |
| Three-graded primary school | 5th + 6th<br>1 | |
| Two-graded primary school | 5th + 6th<br>1/2 | |
| One-graded primary school | 5th + 6th<br>1/2 | |

# APPENDIX 3.

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS IN GREEK

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS TRANSLATED IN ENGLISH

Ερωτηματολόγιο



Αγαπητέ μαθητή / Αγαπητή μαθήτρια,

Αυτό το ερωτηματολόγιο είναι μέρος μιας έρευνας και ο σκοπός του είναι να εξετάσει τι νομίζουν οι μαθητές και οι μαθήτριες της έκτης δημοτικού για τα μαθήματα που διδάσκονται σε αυτήν την τάξη στο σχολείο τους. Θα ήθελα να μάθω κι εσύ τι νομίζεις. Θα σου ήμουν ευγνώμων αν θα μπορούσες να απαντήσεις όλες τις ερωτήσεις. Σε διαβεβαιώ ότι οι όποιες απαντήσεις σου είναι εμπιστευτικές και θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για αυτή την έρευνα μόνο.

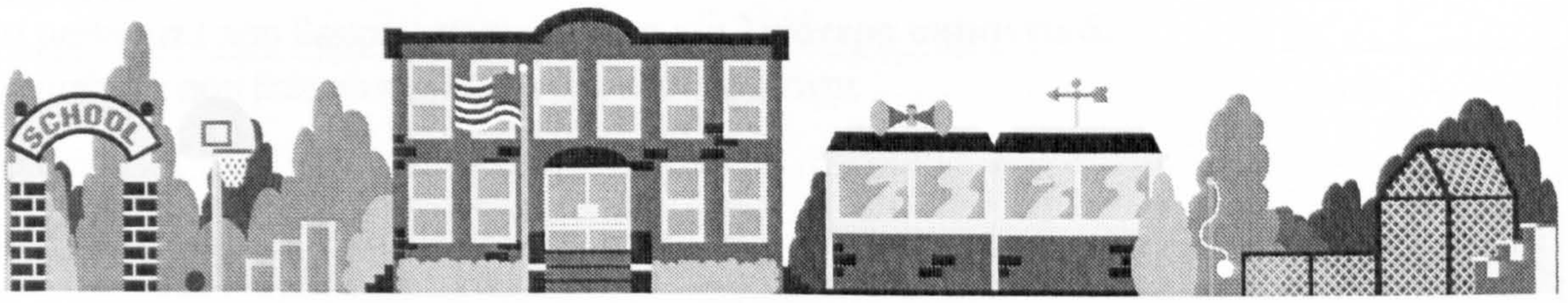
Ερώτηση 1.

Σε παρακαλώ, σημείωσε παρακάτω πώς χαρακτηρίζεις τα μαθήματά σου:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΙΚΑ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |
| ΓΛΩΣΣΑ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΤΙΚΑ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |
| ΞΕΝΗ ΓΛΩΣΣΑ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΑΓΩΓΗ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |
| ΦΥΣΙΚΗ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |
| ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ | Ενδιαφέρον | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Βαρετό |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό |
| | Εύκολο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Δύσκολο |
| | Εξετάζομαι πολύ | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Εξετάζομαι λίγο |
| | Χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στα επόμενα σχολικά χρόνια |
| | Χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι χρήσιμο στην αγορά εργασίας |
| | Γενικά σημαντικό για τους γονείς | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Γενικά όχι σημαντικό για τους γονείς |
| | Καλό σχολικό βιβλίο | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Όχι καλό σχολικό βιβλίο |



Τα μαθήματά σου:

Αγγλικά (και στο σχολείο και στο φροντιστήριο)
Γεωγραφία
Γλώσσα
Γυμναστική
Θρησκευτικά
Ιστορία
Καλλιτεχνικά
Κοινωνική και Πολιτική Αγωγή
Μαθηματικά
Φυσική

Ερώτηση 2.

Τα μαθήματα που σου **αρέσουν περισσότερο** και **λιγότερο:**

Το μάθημα που μου αρέσει *πιο πολύ από όλα* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

*Ενα άλλο* μάθημα που μου αρέσει *πολύ* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

Το μάθημα που μου αρέσει *πιο λίγο από όλα* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

*Ενα άλλο* μάθημα που *δεν* μου αρέσει είναι .....

επειδή.....

.....

Ερώτηση 3.

Τα μαθήματα που θεωρείς **περισσότερο** και **λιγότερο σημαντικά:**

Το μάθημα που θεωρώ *πιο σημαντικό από όλα* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

Ενα *άλλο* μάθημα που θεωρώ *πολύ σημαντικό* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

Το μάθημα που θεωρώ *λιγότερο σημαντικό από όλα* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

Ένα *άλλο* μάθημα που θεωρώ *λιγότερο σημαντικό* είναι .....

επειδή .....

.....

Ερώτηση 4.

Γράψε με λίγα λόγια τι νομίζεις ότι *σου προσφέρει* το σχολείο σου:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Είσαι αγόρι ( ) ή κορίτσι ( );

Σε παρακαλώ, έλεγξε αν έχεις συμπληρώσει όλες τις ερωτήσεις.

Σε ευχαριστώ πολύ για τη συνεργασία

Questionnaire

Dear student,

This questionnaire is part of a research study that seeks to find what children think about the subjects they are taught in the sixth grade of primary school.

I would like to learn what you think as well; many children at your age have given me their opinions. I would be grateful if you could answer all the items. Please, be sure that your answers are confidential and will be used for my study only.

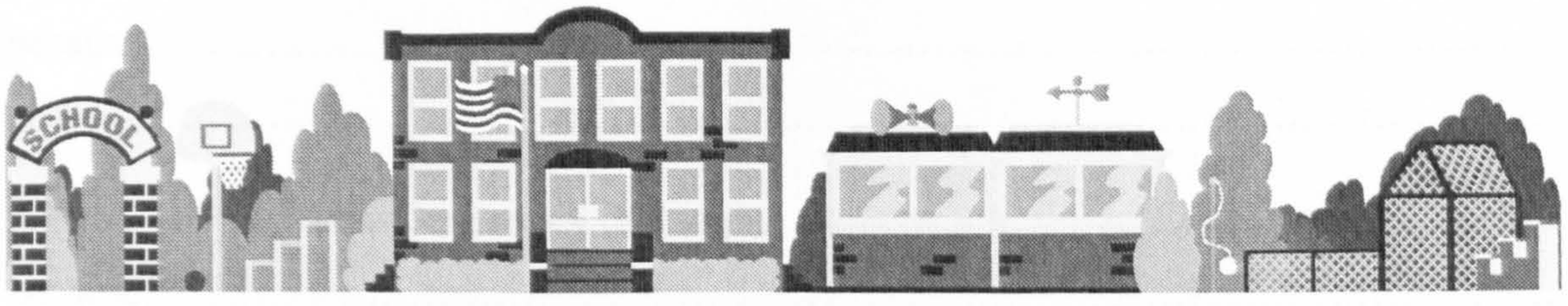
Question 1.

Please, note how you feel about the school subjects and activities below:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| MATHEMATICS | Interesting | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Boring |
| | Generally Important | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | Easy | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | Important for parents | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | Nice textbook | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Bad textbook |
| GREEK | Interesting | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Boring |
| | Generally Important | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | Easy | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | Important for parents | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | Nice textbook | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● | Bad textbook |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| RELIGIOUS | EDUCATION | Interesting | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Boring |
| | | Generally Important | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | | Easy | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | | Important for parents | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | | Nice textbook | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Bad textbook |
| FOREIGN | LANGUAGE | Interesting | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Boring |
| | | Generally Important | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | | Easy | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | | Important for parents | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | | Nice textbook | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Bad textbook |
| SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP | EDUCATION | Interesting | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Boring |
| | | Generally Important | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | | Easy | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | | Important for parents | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | | Nice textbook | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Bad textbook |
| PHYSICS | | Interesting | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Boring |
| | | Generally Important | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | | Easy | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | Important for parents | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | Nice textbook | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Bad textbook |
| H I S T O R Y | Interesting | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Boring |
| | Generally Important | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Generally Unimportant |
| | Easy | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Difficult |
| | Strongly assessed | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Little assessed |
| | Useful in the job market | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful in the job market |
| | Useful for future studies | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not useful for future studies |
| | Important for parents | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Not important for parents |
| | Nice textbook | ● ● ● . ● ● ● | Bad textbook |



Your subjects:

English (both at school and private courses) English
Geography
Greek
Physical Education
Religious Education
History
Music, Arts and Crafts
Social and Citizenship Education
Mathematics
Physics

Question 2.

The subjects that you **like best** and **least**:

The subject I like best is.....

because .....

.....

Another subject I like very much is.....

because.....

.....

The subject I like least is.....

because.....

.....

Another subject I like very little is.....

because.....

.....

Question 3,

The subjects that you consider as **more important** and as **less important**:

The subject I consider as most important is.....

because.....

.....

Another subject I consider as very important.....

because.....

.....

The subject I consider as least important is.....

because .....

.....

Another subject I consider as not at all important is.....

because .....

.....

Question 4.

Please, write in a few words about what you think that the school *offers* you:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Are you a boy ( ) or a girl ( )?

Please, check if you have answered all the items.

Thank you for your co-operation.

# APPENDIX 4.

## STATISTICAL EVIDENCE*

* the evidence is taken from output of the statistical programme SPSS 10.0.

# Descriptives

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assessment of Physics | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.72 | 1.47 |
| Assessment of History | 147 | 1 | 7 | 5.63 | 1.49 |
| Assessment of Greek | 149 | 1 | 7 | 5.49 | 1.48 |
| Assessment of Foreign Language | 148 | 1 | 7 | 5.32 | 1.72 |
| Assessment of Mathematics | 150 | 1 | 7 | 5.28 | 1.43 |
| Assessment of RE | 147 | 1 | 7 | 4.68 | 2.03 |
| Assessment of SCE | 150 | 1 | 7 | 4.64 | 1.88 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 135 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Importance of Foreign Language | 150 | 1 | 7 | 6.60 | .93 |
| Importance of Mathematics | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.39 | 1.22 |
| Importance of History | 151 | 1 | 7 | 6.35 | 1.18 |
| Importance of Physics | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.35 | 1.32 |
| Importance of Greek | 150 | 1 | 7 | 6.21 | 1.19 |
| Importance of RE | 154 | 1 | 7 | 5.78 | 1.48 |
| Importance of SCE | 151 | 1 | 7 | 5.11 | 1.89 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 140 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Importance of Foreign Language for parents | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.64 | 1.61 |
| Importance of Mathematics for parents | 154 | 1 | 7 | 5.64 | 1.55 |
| Importance of History for parents | 150 | 1 | 7 | 5.47 | 1.67 |
| Importance of Greek for parents | 151 | 1 | 7 | 5.41 | 1.64 |
| Importance of Physics for parents | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.36 | 1.67 |
| Importance of RE for parents | 150 | 1 | 7 | 4.81 | 1.87 |
| Importance of SCE for parents | 150 | 1 | 7 | 4.61 | 1.80 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 143 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Usefulness of Mathematics in secondary school | 153 | 1 | 7 | 6.59 | 1.14 |
| Usefulness of Foreign Language in secondary school | 151 | 1 | 7 | 6.50 | 1.14 |
| Usefulness of Greek in secondary school | 150 | 1 | 7 | 6.28 | 1.23 |
| Usefulness of Physics in secondary school | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.28 | 1.30 |
| Usefulness of History in secondary school | 147 | 1 | 7 | 5.95 | 1.39 |
| Usefulness of RE in secondary school | 154 | 1 | 7 | 5.02 | 1.81 |
| Usefulness of SCE in secondary school | 150 | 1 | 7 | 4.82 | 1.97 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 142 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Usefulness of Mathematics in the job market | 153 | 1 | 7 | 6.22 | 1.32 |
| Usefulness of Foreign Language in job market | 151 | 1 | 7 | 6.19 | 1.56 |
| Usefulness of Greek in the job market | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.53 | 1.73 |
| Usefulness of Physics in job market | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.15 | 1.79 |
| Usefulness of History in the job market | 149 | 1 | 7 | 4.56 | 1.89 |
| Usefulness of SCE in the job market | 152 | 1 | 7 | 4.37 | 2.10 |
| Usefulness of RE in job market | 151 | 1 | 7 | 3.81 | 1.82 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 144 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality of Physics Textbook | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.28 | 1.31 |
| Quality of Greek Textbook | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.98 | 1.52 |
| Quality of History Textbook | 151 | 1 | 7 | 5.89 | 1.77 |
| Quality of RE Textbook | 150 | 1 | 7 | 5.81 | 1.88 |
| Quality of Mathematics Textbook | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.68 | 1.68 |
| Quality of SCE Textbook | 151 | 1 | 7 | 5.17 | 2.05 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 143 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interest in Physics | 151 | 1 | 7 | 6.35 | 1.54 |
| Interest in History | 151 | 1 | 7 | 6.17 | 1.70 |
| Interest in Mathematics | 153 | 1 | 7 | 5.93 | 1.61 |
| Interest in Foreign Language | 153 | 1 | 7 | 5.86 | 1.90 |
| Interest in RE | 154 | 1 | 7 | 5.81 | 1.65 |
| Interest in Greek | 152 | 1 | 7 | 5.73 | 1.70 |
| Interest in SCE | 153 | 1 | 7 | 4.47 | 2.42 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 149 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EasDif of RE | 147 | 1 | 7 | 6.38 | 1.41 |
| EasDif of SCE | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.17 | 1.52 |
| EasDif of Greek | 152 | 1 | 7 | 6.02 | 1.59 |
| EasDif of Physics | 151 | 1 | 7 | 5.48 | 1.87 |
| EasDif of Foreign Language | 149 | 1 | 7 | 5.20 | 1.90 |
| EasDif of History | 149 | 1 | 7 | 5.05 | 2.02 |
| EasDif of Mathematics | 150 | 1 | 7 | 4.60 | 2.01 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 133 | | | | |

# Means

**Case Processing Summary**

| | Cases | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Included | | Excluded | | Total | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| Interest in SCE * teacher | 153 | 98.1% | 3 | 1.9% | 156 | 100.0% |
| Importance of SCE * teacher | 151 | 96.8% | 5 | 3.2% | 156 | 100.0% |

**Report**

Mean

| teacher | Interest in SCE | Importance of SCE |
|---|---|---|
| V (school A) | 3.48 | 4.87 |
| K (school A) | 4.38 | 5.00 |
| A (school B) | 2.93 | 4.15 |
| L (school B) | 5.87 | 5.40 |
| A (school C) | 4.21 | 5.00 |
| P (school D) | 6.05 | 6.25 |
| T (school E) | 4.86 | 5.29 |
| D (school E) | 5.22 | 4.89 |
| Total | 4.47 | 5.11 |

# Nonparametric Correlations

**Correlations**

| | | | Assessment of Physics | Importance of Physics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Assessment of Physics | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .201* |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .014 |
| | | N | 152 | 151 |
| | Importance of Physics | Correlation Coefficient | .201* | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .014 | . |
| | | N | 151 | 152 |

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Assessment of History | Importance of History |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Assessment of History | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .320** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 147 | 147 |
| | Importance of History | Correlation Coefficient | .320** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 147 | 151 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Assessment of Foreign Language | Importance of Foreign Language |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Assessment of Foreign Language | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .219** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .008 |
| | | N | 148 | 146 |
| | Importance of Foreign Language | Correlation Coefficient | .219** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .008 | . |
| | | N | 146 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Mathematics | Importance of Mathematics for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Mathematics | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .228** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .005 |
| | | N | 152 | 152 |
| | Importance of Mathematics for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .228** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .005 | . |
| | | N | 152 | 154 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Greek | Importance of Greek for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Greek | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .446** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 150 | 149 |
| | Importance of Greek for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .446** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 149 | 151 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of RE | Importance of RE for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of RE | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .441** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 154 | 150 |
| | Importance of RE for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .441** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 150 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Foreign Language | Importance of Foreign Language for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Foreign Language | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .434** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 150 | 150 |
| | Importance of Foreign Language for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .434** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 150 | 152 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of SCE | Importance of SCE for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of SCE | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .480** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 151 | 149 |
| | Importance of SCE for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .480** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 149 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of RE | Importance of RE for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of RE | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .441** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 154 | 150 |
| | Importance of RE for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .441** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 150 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Physics | Importance of Physics for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Physics | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .375** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 152 | 151 |
| | Importance of Physics for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .375** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 151 | 152 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of History | Importance of History for parents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of History | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .405** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 151 | 150 |
| | Importance of History for parents | Correlation Coefficient | .405** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 150 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Foreign Language | Usefulness of Foreign Language in job market |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Foreign Language | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .345** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 150 | 149 |
| | Usefulness of Foreign Language in job market | Correlation Coefficient | .345** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 149 | 151 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Importance of Mathematics | Usefulness of Mathematics in the job market |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Importance of Mathematics | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .321** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 152 | 151 |
| | Usefulness of Mathematics in the job market | Correlation Coefficient | .321** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 151 | 153 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Quality of SCE Textbook | Interest in SCE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Quality of SCE Textbook | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .488** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 151 | 151 |
| | Interest in SCE | Correlation Coefficient | .488** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 151 | 153 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

| | | | Quality of RE Textbook | Interest in RE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Quality of RE Textbook | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .496** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 |
| | | N | 150 | 150 |
| | Interest in RE | Correlation Coefficient | .496** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . |
| | | N | 150 | 154 |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

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